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**THE TRAGEDY OF RUSSIA  
IN PACIFIC ASIA**





ossetine  
Zgoieff.



Ossetine Zgoieff (autograph), a Cossack of the Caucasus,  
General Mischenko's captain of bivouac





# THE TRAGEDY OF RUSSIA IN PACIFIC ASIA

BY  
FREDERICK McCORMICK

*ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR, HALF-TONES FROM  
PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS, ETC.*

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOLUME I



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## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION . . . . .	3
II THE RUSSIAN EASTERN EMPIRE . . . . .	9
III THE CAPITAL OF CONQUEST . . . . .	27
IV THE MACHINERY OF CONQUEST—EMPIRE AT PORT ARTHUR	37
V FLEDGING THE EASTERN EMPIRE . . . . .	51
VI THE EMPIRE ATTACKED . . . . .	62
VII THE WAR SITUATION . . . . .	77
VIII THE NEUTRAL BORDER . . . . .	86
IX LOSS OF THE SEA . . . . .	101
X THE PLAN OF WAR . . . . .	114
XI DESTRUCTION OF THE LINE OF DEFENSE OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE . . . . .	121
XII THE CAPITAL SEGREGATED . . . . .	124
XIII LIAO-TUNG LOST . . . . .	127
XIV THE ARMY BASE: A NEW MILITARY CAPITAL . . . . .	132
XV KUROKI'S INVASION AND THE EASTERN DETACHMENT . . . . .	139
XVI REPULSE OF THE EASTERN DETACHMENT AND LOSS OF THE WHOLE NEW COAST OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE . . . . .	145
XVII SURRENDER OF THE EASTERN BARRIER . . . . .	155
XVIII LIAO-YANG, THE RELIANCE OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE . . . . .	170
XIX PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG . . . . .	185
XX SURRENDER OF THE ARMY BASE . . . . .	196
XXI THE BATTLEFIELD . . . . .	221
XXII THE NEUTRAL ZONE . . . . .	229

## *Contents*

---

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXIII	THE ROAD TO MUKDEN	242
XXIV	MUKDEN, THE ARMY BASE	245
XXV	THE GRAND ARMY	257
XXVI	THE BATTLE OF THE SHA-HO	277
XXVII	DESTRUCTION OF THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE	289
XXVIII	THE ARMY BASE IN WINTER	315
XXIX	LIFE ON THE SHA-HO	224
XXX	HOSTILITIES ON THE SHA-HO	348
XXXI	SURRENDER OF THE CAPITAL OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE	361
XXXII	THE LAST ADVANCE	368
XXXIII	BATTLE OF MUKDEN	378
XXXIV	SURRENDER OF THE REFUGE OF THE LAND FORCES - THE MANCHURIAN CAPITAL	400

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Ossetine Zgojeff (autograph), a Cossack of the Caucasus, General Mischenko's captain of bivouac . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
FACING PAGE	
Panoramic view of Port Arthur taken from Quail Hill, the center of the fortified zone, looking south . . . . .	30
Sketch made at the attack of Port Arthur, February 9, 1904 . . . . .	34
The hurry to get the fleet out of Port Arthur harbor into the road-stead in obedience to orders from St. Petersburg . . . . .	58
Getting the guns over the mountains of the Eastern Barrier . . . . .	122
General Kouropatkin and his staff, together with the Grand Duke Boris . . . . .	134
Retreat from the Battle of Mo-t'ien ling . . . . .	148
Wounded Russian soldiers telling the story of the "terrible enemy" to comrades . . . . .	162
General Orloff . . . . .	186
The Manchurians watching Kouropatkin's defeat at Liao-yang . . . . .	190
Map of the Battle of Liao-Yang . . . . .	194
Escape of the Xth Corps from Kuroki's pursuit in the An-p'ing road .	202
The Xth Corps escaping from the eastern hills with its long train of wounded . . . . .	206
A mounted infantryman . . . . .	210
Tired Siberian horses . . . . .	210
Emergency Red-Cross cart . . . . .	210
Poor feeding . . . . .	210
A Nerchinsk Cossack . . . . .	226
An Orenburg Cossack . . . . .	226
A monk, on duty as a sanitair in the headquarters' hospital . . . . .	250

## *List of Illustrations*

---

	FACING PAGE
A pope (priest) of the Orthodox Russian church . . . . .	250
General Barzhanoff . . . . .	258
General Rennencamp . . . . .	258
Retreat of the infantry of the 17th Corps along the railway on October 12th . . . . .	278
Retreat from T'ou-san-p'u: saving the guns . . . . .	284
General Bilderling . . . . .	290
General Tisenhausen . . . . .	306
General Greikoff . . . . .	330
General Rennencamp . . . . .	380
Map of the Battle of Mukden . . . . .	384
The battlefield at Yu-hung-t'un, March 6th . . . . .	406
Part of the line at Yu-hung-t'un . . . . .	410
Russian soldiers bringing in Japanese wounded from the Hsin-min- t'un road . . . . .	414
Saving the siege guns of the Sha-ho position . . . . .	418

**THE TRAGEDY OF RUSSIA  
IN PACIFIC ASIA**



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THE encroachment of the West upon the sacred soil of East Asia has been continuous throughout more than fifty years, during which time Portugal, Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia segregated and exploited regions and cities as large in territory and as populous as European states of the first class.

But it remained for Russia to devise depredations that finally convulsed East Asia and hustled the West back upon itself.

The unfolding of a scheme like the schemes of Napoleon, but emanating from a royal conspiracy within one empire, precipitated an epoch. Russia is seen in the '90's of the last century looking with admiring and jealous eyes upon the mighty and glorious empire of the Britons, rising as it does from the emerald isles and continents in four hemispheres, and, their imaginations clutching at opportunity, the imperial conspirators are seen forming what they made known as the Russian Eastern Empire. To fledge this embryo state and to establish it in perpetuity by reducing and overawing Japan, as China was already domineered and overawed, the conspirators moved all the mobile and negotiable forces of Russia, which by the adventure undid herself and for self-preservation had at last to make a peace with her intended victim that is the severest disgrace any European throne has endured since the time of Napoleon. But the conflict with Japan has not been a mere contest with a single power. It has been a problem of more than half a century that has

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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been worked out for the West, and a working out which centuries had waited for.

The solution may be likened to a game of ten-pins. Japan, one of four powers vitally concerned and only the third in size and wealth, in swift succession

(1) Captured the sea from Russia, the largest and wealthiest;

(2) Destroyed the line of defense of the Russian Eastern Empire;

(3) Segregated and captured the capital of the Russian Eastern Empire;

(4) Captured the "neutral zone" of the Russian land concession (Liao-tung);

(5) Captured the whole new coast of the Russian Eastern Empire;

(6) Captured the Russian base (Liao-yang);

(7) Destroyed the Russian offensive (battles of Sha-Ho and San-chia-p'u);

(8) Captured the Russian refuge, the Manchurian capital, Mukden;

(9) Captured and destroyed the whole Russian mobile navy; and

(10) Ended the war with a timely and profitable peace with concessions of Russian territory, property, franchises, etc.

But the effect upon Russia, while wholly revolutionary, is but a small part of the result of these ten great events. To match them an earlier history than that of the abolition of slavery, the beginning of a new world, must be recalled. Their importance is to the other nations of the West whose populations and governmental systems by their advancement hold them in contact and force them to compromise with East Asia.

Since 1905 the nations of the West have shifted their

## *Introduction*

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Oriental footing; their military, educational, religious, not to say, ethical footing. Libraries of books that have been written on the default and dissolution of East Asia appear now but foolish commentaries upon the default and confounding of the West. Their contents must be repudiated or restated in another way. The reason of this has gone forth into the world; the East has met the West.

In nineteen months the world was altered. Not only was it changed politically, geographically, and militarily, but scientifically, for the East has taught us unrevealed uses of our implements of war, of our principles of diplomacy, and it will teach us to abandon our science of ethnology and to modify our ethics, our politics and our religion.

It has been the occupation of Holland, Great Britain and France, and is the dream of three contiguous nations—Russia, Japan, and America, and of at least two other first-class powers, to build up cities in the eastern and southern seas, and empires in the lands of the eastern and southern seas like that of Great Britain. But it is now first necessary to know the apprehension and wish of Chinese and Japanese whom these enterprises vitally affect. For the recent great attempt upon East Asia by Russia has disclosed that these designs, past and present, are in the nature of unwelcome depredations that can be extinguished.

Man, as he is understood in the West, is loath to accept the idea that the torch of civilization and humanity has been carried forward by the short sturdy yellow legs that doubled up the Grand Army of Russia and rolled it back beyond the Baikal. This is because the full splendor of events cannot be immediately appreciated. But this does not affect their importance. Most of the problems of civilization remain still to be worked out, when they will be fully understood, but their final solution began in 1905 when the world was entirely discovered and when the last great

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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event had taken place in man's migration, the meeting of the East and West and the clearing up in a preliminary but effective manner of their initial differences. This achievement is also Japan's, and the events which she, provoked by the imposition of the Russian Eastern Empire, has offered for the consideration of this world are:

- (1) The demolition of the Russian Eastern Empire, and the Revolution of Russia;
- (2) The elimination of governments and administrations whose weaknesses were at the bottom of Western depredation in East Asia;
- (3) The formation of the New Japanese Empire;
- (4) The consolidation of East Asia;
- (5) Continental reconstruction;
- (6) The elimination of the West and the domination of the seas of East Asia;
- (7) The revolution of foreign relations, especially American relations.

Just what these things now mean has been the subject of the most feverish speculation in all Western countries since June, 1905. Aside from the cataclysmal effects produced upon Russia, these speculations have been illuminated by direct effects upon America in the form of resentment and hostilities exhibited by both China and Japan. America must observe that the first hostile demonstrations by the newly competent East were made against her. The first resentment by China when emancipated from Western menace by Japanese success in war was in the form of trade hostility directed against America. The first antagonism to Western nations following her complete vanquishing of Russia was made by Japan against America. In view of these important facts the meaning to the world of the great events submitted to it by Japan may be arrived at by an understanding of their meaning to America.

## *Introduction*

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This importance has been anticipated by the direct participation of America in the causes, progress and termination of the war. The intervention by an American president in the vital affairs of two first-class foreign powers to stop a war of the first magnitude is an unprecedented event. The war which Theodore Roosevelt as President of the United States ended was not a war whose causes, object and effects were alien, but they were on the contrary a part of the past, the present, and are vitally a part of the future of America.

American pioneers had no more than planted their feet firmly upon the Alaskan slopes of the Pacific than beyond the volcanic fires of Kamchatka they saw the flash and heard the roll of great guns, far greater than startled the forests of the Atlantic when the first New World was born. And the sound of those guns had scarcely died away when a second New World was growling over its cubs thrown up on our shores and America was startled at the sound. These things have come about by the adventures of the West in East Asia and for the unexpected outcome of those adventures the nations that looked on and even those that participated, like America, are found unprepared. As with other nations the situation of America is suddenly outlined as that of an alien, adverse and therefore menacing civilization varying only in degree from the aggressive and predatory elements of the rest of Western civilization.

America is disposed to feel abused by being placed in the same category in world politics with European powers whose national welfare and safety are fixed in the course of political depredation and territorial acquisition. And Americans are disposed to flatter themselves that because America is not intentionally or actively predatory in East Asia and that because American policy has been one of benevolence there that America is so understood and appreciated by Chinese

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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and Japanese. We have not made a greater or more pernicious mistake. The purely moral policy of a single nation can change in nowise the aspect to East Asians of this era of an outside world that it is a unit in color, religion, dress, custom and exhibition of physical force, and whose main manifestation in East Asia is geographical, economical and religious depredation. America, though doubtless among the least of the offenders, is judged like all the rest by a standard of villainy fixed by the worst. Those who may be by practice correct are by comparison unfortunate. But though abused by destiny and prejudice they cannot escape the working out of a great future in which it is given America to play among Western powers the principal part in Pacific Asia.

In this working out of a future great destiny on the Pacific the Eastern leopard cannot change his spots—much less can the Western tiger change his stripes. But these two can live together and be made to more closely resemble and supplement each other.

Now upon the re-establishment of peace America is left to find her position and to first work out the greatest problems presented by the war. In doing this she will not harbor dangerous delusions regarding the depredations in Asia of her kin nor be without a priceless understanding of her position so long as she possesses a knowledge and belief of Western depredations upon the Pacific East and of how the game was played between Nicholas Romanoff and Mutsuhito, between Alexis, Kourapatkin and Oyama Iwao and the subsequent status and acts of the nations east and west that participated and looked on.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RUSSIAN EASTERN EMPIRE

THE Russian contention for this Eastern Empire which should on the Pacific balance and complete their European Empire, and which ended in the disastrous world drama centered at Port Arthur, was the finale of a seductive expansion which began more than three centuries ago and can be said to date from Peter the Great. In its progress it first encountered the Chinese proper on the Amur and was thrown back. This was also the second check to Russian adventures on the Pacific coast of Asia, the first having been administered by the Manchurians. Russia's long career of successful expansion was through savage regions and when it met in Manchuria the obstacle of civilization it failed. Russia not only failed in her contest with Japan, but in no single-handed contest with China has she ever succeeded. And it is not only now very doubtful—it is appreciably certain—that she never will. Chinese arms and Chinese diplomacy may themselves still save the day, even without the direct interference of Japan.

The voyage of Russia eastward was continuous. The government at St. Petersburg was at all times conscious of the persistence of what it self-phrased its "destiny." Imperial authority was at all times conscious of the acquisition of domain and the extension of jurisdiction. Among the last acts in the game of Eastern Empire the government sanctioned the dictum "historic destiny" which was confidently claimed when having arrived on the shores of the Gulf of Chih-li the creation of the *fa*<sup>+</sup> city of Dalny was decreed.

The individual autocrats of the great political fiasco which took place there, proudly called "empire-builders," were always conscious of the examples of their numerous predecessors—Ignatieff, who by treaty with China in 1860 secured an advantageous delimitation of the Amur boundaries and all that part of Manchuria on the Japan Sea; Admiral Putiatin, who concluded the Russian Treaty of Tientsin in 1858—similar to those made by other powers; Muravieff, who established Russian settlers on the Amur and concluded the Treaty of Aigun, whereby Russia came into possession of the left bank of the Amur and what is now the Primorsk; Chernigovsky, who established Albazin at the top of the big bend of the Amur; Stepanoff, who sailed up and down the Amur for several years collecting tribute from the Chinese inhabitants and died the miserable death of a whipped adventurer; Khabaroff, who explored the Amur to the mouth of the Sungari, forcing the natives to swear allegiance to the Czar; Poyarkoff, who plundered and murdered among the native tribes in whose territories he explored on the upper Amur; and then farther back, the traditional heroes of central and western Siberia.

The progress of the Manchurian voyage is comprised within the forty years between 1858 and 1898. In these forty years Russia came down from the Arctic watershed of Siberia to the Sea of Japan and to the Gulf of Chih-li. Not content to abide beyond Manchuria, as she had agreed to do in 1689 in the Treaty of Nerchinsk, she descended to the Amur carrying settlers and establishing military posts, and picking up the boundary stones, carried them to Harbarvost and to Vladivostok, where they are now to be seen in the local museums. Boundary stones have ever been to political expansionists but ethnological curiosities.

Russia came down to the Amur in the seventeenth century, when the present Chinese dynasty was busy attain-

ing and cementing its own sovereignty in the south, as well as to the north of the eighteen provinces. But when it had a breathing space from its conquests in which to gather armies, it destroyed the Russian forts and settlements of those days and Russia's peace plenipotentiary was glad enough, in the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689), to sign a manifest of complete withdrawal, and it is to Russia's credit that she kept the treaty agreement for more than a century and a half, while at the same time cherishing a wholesome respect for Chinese arms and Chinese diplomacy. This is the only boundary treaty she has kept.

It was in 1858 and in 1860 when China, exhausted by the Tai-ping Rebellion and intimidated by the Anglo-French expedition which had reached Peking, her capital, signed away her old boundaries to the invader Muravieff, against whom China never offered to break a lance, and allowed Russian empire to move down to the Tumen River, which divides Manchuria from Korea, and occupy all the left bank of the Amur and more.

It was at the time of the Japan-China war of 1894-5 that Russia obtained her railway concession across the north of Manchuria (it is supposed by bluster, threats and cajolery), when the Chinese were deeply chagrined and humiliated by the Japanese successes.

It was in 1898 that Russia received from China in the nature of a reward Kuang-tung, a part of the territory which had been recovered from Japan, and the concession for a railway to join the new acquisition with the railway in the north without the inconvenience of any kind of conflict or strong resistance. Russia therefore may be said to have been victorious in her aggressions in China only when other powers were like tigers upon China's back. It must be borne in mind that this was not so much national design as it was imperialist conspiracy and diplomatic adventure.

For thirty-seven years after Muravieff carried the Manchurian-Siberian boundary stones of the Nerchinsk Treaty down to the Amur and to the Sea of Japan, no epoch-marking event occurred in Russian expansion there. The first war of the period of the Manchurian "question" took place in 1894 when Japan, offended at the military occupation of Korea which China had attempted contrary to agreement, routed the Chinese armies from Korea—an independent state—and from southern Manchuria, and the Chinese fleet from the seas; made Korean independence which she had asserted unassailable, and took the conquered Manchurian territory as indemnity. The treaty of peace made at Shimoneseki in Japan formally ceded this territory to her and it was through the recession of the same territory, diplomatically brought about by a combination of European powers—Russia, Germany and France mainly—that Russia was enabled, by acquiring a part of the same, to reach the end of her voyage, and initiate adventures that rapidly effected the war which was such a disaster to her, and which altered the world.

The voyage, which in 1858 reached the Sea of Japan, depriving China and Manchuria of an outlet there, had in 1898, when Russia secured the lease of the Kuang-tung Peninsula (Liao-tung), reached the Gulf of Chih-li, beyond which it is probable that it could not go, although the conspirators themselves admitted no limits. The attainment of this coveted territory by peaceful design from Japan, who had fairly won it in war within less than two years, had a humiliating aspect to the original conquerors never forgotten.

After the Japan-China war the chief political event in Manchuria was the acquisition by Russia in 1896 of the right to build the "Chinese Eastern Railway." By this achievement a Russian military highway was established straight through Manchuria from east to west, and the

original all-Russian line connecting with Vladivostok by way of the Amur valley—an expensive and enormous undertaking—was left in satisfied abeyance; empire being promoted in a little better clime. The significance of this event was tremendous.

Now in addition Russia acquired in 1898 the lease of Kuang-tung, containing Port Arthur, and immediately added to it the right granted by China to connect these realms at the southern extremity of Manchuria with the Chinese Eastern Railway in the north, the connecting line to be called the "Central Manchurian Railway." In all these transactions China was helpless or perverse, and Japan humiliated. In the three years preceding the outbreak of war with Japan, Russia reached the high-water mark in her career of aggression on Chinese soil. Then the excesses of her conquest-greed, military show and bluster provoked hostility and contempt in the whole outside world.

That Russia's northern concessions were acquired during the progress of the Japan-China war serves to show that events were even then moving very rapidly in the Eastern game. The contest between the two unequal nations, Russia and Japan, who as outsiders were most vitally interested in Manchuria, was irrevocably fixed and avowed, and by the year 1900 was, so to speak, "neck and neck." The advantage so far was with Russia. Continental interference (in the form of intervention) that achieved the recession of Liao-tung and Port Arthur to China had made sure the acquirement of a part of the same to Russia and enabled Russia to occupy Chinese soil for two years with troops (Frontier Guards) which were ready when the Boxer trouble commenced in 1900 to invest and conquer. Japan had won and lost southern Manchuria, including the fortress harbor of Port Arthur. And Russia by diplomatic good fortune and conspiracy had filched it, as the world agrees, from

the ground of contest. Furthermore, when the Boxer troubles gave Japan an opportunity to play an ambitious part and to make good what she might through military achievements on the mainland, the continued Continental conspiracy prevented her from even landing her troops to relieve the distress of foreigners or of even her own people in China pending the co-operation of other great powers, while in the meantime Russia was at liberty to push forward, and did rapidly occupy the whole of Manchuria alone. It was as if the whole world, suspicious of Japan, was conspiring to secure Manchuria for Russian ownership. There is no doubt that not only the simple-minded Russian was unduly puffed up with this windfall of undeserved fortune, but that Russia's friends and well-wishers in her conquest paid an homage to her prestige which she did not deserve. A discord of forces friendly and unfriendly worked for the time being in concert with her designs, like a decree of fate, and established in countries like Germany and France a conviction of confidence in the supremacy of Imperial Russia which manifested itself in demonstrations almost to the end. By 1900 her railways in Manchuria were half finished. To explain more fully the existing situation at this time it can be said that the Russian adventurers who were assembled in groups and were working under the general heads of the Russo-Chinese Bank, Chinese Eastern and the Central Manchurian railways, and the Manchurian and Kuang-tung military administrations, had begun and were rapidly building the whole Manchurian system of railways and auxiliary commercial organizations which were to complete the machinery of empire. The railways were under construction from all points touched by tide-water and reached by already working railways. The points on the Manchurian system reached by Siberian railways were Nikolsk in the Primorsk, and Kaidolove outside the northwest border of

Manchuria, from which places, as well as from Harbin on the navigable Sungari, Niu-ch'uang on the Liao, and Dalny on the Bay of Korea, construction was carried on. As already stated, perhaps half of the railway system was completed when in 1900 the Boxers stampeded the constructors and all foreigners in Manchuria and tore up a large part of the work, destroying locomotives and all available foreign property.

This foolish and unlucky mistake of the Chinese, while it cost them freedom of administration and of movement in their own domain, gave Russia such an opportunity as was exactly suited to her methods of conquest and of which she instantly availed herself. Russia immediately occupied the land from east to west and from north to south with troops. In addition she established supervisors of government, with vague, ill-defined and gloomy powers, in the three provinces of Sheng-king, Kirin and Hei-lung-chiang, to which the highest officers of the native throne of China were amenable, and it became the occupation of these supervisors to dictate, to hector and intimidate from top to bottom the native rule.

It will be seen from these events that Russia, in so far as forcible conquest went, was "acquiring" Manchuria very rapidly indeed. And her enemies by the very irony of human exertion were themselves contributing to this success. The Tartar generals at the three provincial capitals of Mukden, Kirin and Tsi-tsi-har, virtually viceroys of the throne, were supervised by Russian "Commissars" representing only the highest Russian military authority at Port Arthur, and to whom they were coerced to defer. The Russian troops who had collected in bodies at the important centers,\* from which points they operated, maintained a constant administrative occupation for four and one-half years, or until driven out

\* Hailar, Merghen, Tsi-tsi-har, San-sing, Harbin, Ninguta, Hun-chun, Kirin, Mukden, Liao-yang, Niu-ch'uang, Feng-huang-ch'eng, etc.

by Japanese armies, notwithstanding solemn obligations to withdraw signed with China and admitted before the powers in 1902.

From this date last mentioned the "Manchurian question" rapidly became acute. All other powers had surrendered whatever domain they had occupied by reasons of losses incurred by the Boxers and were in some instances a little anxiously awaiting the recalcitrant and Fabian barbarian of the north to let go his hold and withdraw. At last an evacuation protocol was signed between the Wai-wu-pu or Chinese Foreign Office and the Russian Minister in Peking which provided for the withdrawal of the Russian armies of occupation from the entire country within eighteen months. According to this agreement, which is called the Manchurian Convention, the evacuation was to be accomplished in three steps, as follows: The region south and west of the Liao River was to be evacuated at the end of six months from date; the region from the Liao River to the Amur River provinces at the end of twelve months, and the northern country back to the Siberian boundary at the end of eighteen months. These conditions and agreements were never fulfilled.

It cannot be said that it was not the intention of Russia to carry out this Convention, for no one is certain of what the word "Russia" then meant. The Government was dominated by conspirators and the Evacuation Convention was carried through by the only agent of the Imperial Government in the Far East who was inimical to the conspirators and who condemned their predatory schemes—Mr. Lessar. The region south and west of the Liao River, containing no very important cities, nor harbors, nor Russian works, nor vested interests (the railway it contained belonged to China under British mortgage), was duly evacuated. The rôle of claimant of the Manchurian Convention, seeing that

the Convention had been authoritatively signed, was one which the Imperial Government under the conspirators was glad to boast, since it could be done with no menace to "destiny," and though it was afterward proved to be actually merely accidental.

But the obligations of the evacuation agreement were intolerable to the empire-builders, who now placed Admiral Alexeieff, ruling at Port Arthur, at the head of their adventures. Evacuation ceased when it reached Russian vested interests at the Liao River and the Manchurian Convention came to grief. The destiny of the Eastern Empire was now entrusted solely to Admiral Alexeieff, who was made Viceroy of the Russian Far East, a commission not only for contiguous Mongolia and for parts of Siberia and Kuang-tung, but for all possible rights held by Russia to have been acquired in Manchuria and Korea—a vague, illimitable and nearly boundless patent—as well as the elements of the government doing duty in banks, railways, shipping companies and other industrial concerns in Manchuria. A navy and an army assembled to serve him.

The conspirators, after the signing of the evacuation agreement at Peking, displaced the Russian Minister Lessar and the administration of the "Eastern Empire" usurped the Imperial Russian Legation in Peking. Alexeieff dispatched a chargé d'affaires of his own with a super-important trust from Port Arthur, the fortress capital of conquest, to Peking. Bezobrazoff, Oktomsky and other leaders of the conspiracy were at the time in Port Arthur, and the events of this short period of the conquest moved very fast. The actions of these conspirators indicated that at least the Eastern Empire was intent on immediate war. The operations of Russian agents in Korea implicate the St. Petersburg Government in the conspiracy, for Alexeieff controlled them, and the acts of Russian agents clearly showed the anticipation of war.

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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It is certain that the acts of the Port Arthur régime were now clumsily and brutally devised and executed, and there is no wonder that they led so quickly to war. Lessar's agreement was the embodiment of endless promises given by Russia to the various powers to evacuate, and the manner of its repudiation by Alexeieff *et al.*, was perhaps the most revolting act of their diplomacy. The whole world was suddenly startled and scandalized by the announcement of seven revolutionary demands presented to the Chinese Government by Alexeieff, through his chargé d'affaires—demands amounting to a declaration of proprietorship of the whole of Manchuria, a repudiation of the Manchurian Convention and an open challenge to three powers.

The Chinese Government made known to the world the outrageous demands made upon her by Alexeieff and fell back upon the powers for support. The hegemony at Port Arthur immediately retaliated by taking military possession of the gates of the City of Mukden, the ancient capital of the Manchus, and perhaps the most sacred spot in China to the ruling dynasty, and having now completed the Manchurian Railway system, which was invested with Russian troops, made known its intention to sit tight.

The date for the evacuation of the region secondly delimited in the Manchurian Convention, now passed without any evacuation taking place, while on the contrary means of defense of territory held were devised and promoted by the military actors at Port Arthur. On April 13, 1903, Alexeieff was made Viceroy, or, as styled in the Imperial ukase, "Imperial Lieutenant of the Far East." In October, 1903, when the date upon which the complete evacuation of Manchuria was to have been accomplished had passed, he made a defiant demonstration at his stronghold, Port Arthur, of all the military assets of Kuang-tung, including the naval forces. This demonstration was diligently advertised abroad

and the impression given out that from fifty to seventy-five thousand troops participated in it. But it is known to the powers that the actual number of land and naval forces was twenty thousand to twenty-five thousand troops. Russia had now, by her habit and policy of greed, her subterfuge of bad faith, her arrogance to nations, and her defiance of right, struck a precipitate descent into catastrophes such as only accompany the last arbitrament of empires.

The meaning of "Imperial Lieutenancy of the Far East," about which Japan and China repeatedly questioned Russia without getting an avowal, had now for some time been realized, though in Tokyo alone was it understood and the truth believed. Though the past history of Russian aggression was known, it could not be believed that modern Russian agents could be capable of more daring deeds before the eyes of the world than Muravieff and Ignatieff had committed in an era of political darkness in the Far East. The disclosures of the autumn of 1903 brought immense relief to the Japanese, whose course was now completely simplified; war was indisputable. From now Russia, as she affected the Far East, became the "Eastern Empire," a sovereignty embraced in the Imperial dictum "Lieutenancy of the Far East." Russia was "The Eastern Empire," and the "Eastern Empire" was Russia, and nowhere in the Far East was there any agent of the Russian Government who was not a part of "The Eastern Empire." Not until after the Eastern Empire was launched into a war for the purpose of consolidating and justifying by force and bloodshed what it had devised by conspiracy was there any government agent opposing it. Lessar, whose wisdom was flouted and who carried through the evacuation agreement, did not return to the East to exercise any influence and only returned to die.

As Russia is such a country that no man appears to be able to say exactly what it is or what attributes belonged

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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strictly to it, it seems more just to deal with its adventures in the Far East under the standard of the Eastern Empire, and thus the nation and the Government will be able to share alike the credit and the odium of their exploit. It is not necessary, then, to pursue Russia's identity in the making of the Eastern Empire beyond the established fact that all the forces of Russia, in so far as they could be controlled by the Emperor and the Government were freely and vengefully given to further the whole scheme of the Eastern Empire.\* Diplomatically, financially, militarily, the state was convulsed to give up its strength as was shown by the throes into which it declined on this account, and its credit was peddled in the capitals of the world to give vitality to that strength.

At the opening of the war the Eastern Empire as projected by the conspiracy in the Government and as adopted by the Government and the Emperor into the national plan of state, and which was believed by many to be a reality, embraced at least two independent empires, Manchuria and Korea, with contiguous territory in Mongolia and Siberia. It embraced the complete subjugation of Manchuria, Korea and an indefinite portion of Mongolia, and with a great fleet moving between Port Arthur and Vladivostok, this Empire was intended to control the confronting seas—the Japan Sea and the Yellow Sea—and to dominate Japan. It had already an open Pacific coast along the Island of Saghalen. But the arrest of Japanese development at the stage of a third, or at most a second-rate power, and the control of the straits of La Pérouse and Tsushima (Korean straits) was to it essential. No reasonable mind familiar with the methods and the minds of the hegemony at Port Arthur can doubt that they believed in the domination of Japan as a matter of course, and regarded it as a foregone conclusion that

\* See Russia's Declaration of War, in Appendix.

## *The Russian Eastern Empire*

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with the war inaugurated Japan as a world power would remain as a nation of the third or fourth rate, which they believed her to be, and would continue her existence, which she would owe to Great Britain, under the shadow of Russian domination, as would China, where already existed extensive Russian plans partly worked out.

The Eastern Empire was thus composed: the Primorsk, including Saghalen, gave an ocean frontier. Korea guarded the Tsushima Strait and cut Japan's communications with Manchuria and North China. The Sungari and the Liao rivers gave vast natural communications, and the Great Wall formed an admirable boundary for treaties and a fine diplomatic barrier. With command of the sea the east and south were protected, for Russia had with Great Britain a written agreement admitting Russia's influence and conceding her sphere south to the Great Wall. On the north was Russia; on the northwest was Russia; while on the west Mongolia was nearly as much Russian as it was Chinese and offered a region for expansion uncontested by other powers, and limited only by England in Thibet and Russia in Turkestan. There was no serious opposition in all of this region to Russia's influence, except the opposition of Japan. And it was believed by the Russians that Japanese opposition could be scared out of Manchuria entirely, and even beyond the Yalu to Seoul, from where it could be whipped off the peninsula and off the seas.

The machinery which for nearly a decade had been in operation to subjugate these realms, was extensive and formidable. When the war broke out the Russians knew more about Manchuria than any other people and far more than they were credited with. In 1895-6, just after the Chinese-Japanese War, Russian agents began researches into the wealth of the country in view of commercial possibilities. The Russians began to ally themselves with certain Chinese,

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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or Chinese with themselves, and penetrated to the remotest places in search of metals, timber, and grazing and agricultural land. They accumulated comprehensive statistics and they mapped the country, especially the southern half, in an extensive manner. They are the only nation that has done this, and the Japanese themselves relied upon Russian maps in their invasion.

The Russians enrolled princes, envoys, chiefs, officials, dignitaries, headmen, merchants and brigands into a directory. They practically abolished the Mongolian boundary. Northeastern Mongolia has been for a long time under their influence and continues to be dominated by them. Most of the princes of those regions who are tributary to Peking are at the same time amenable to Russian authority. There are perhaps not more than two Mongolian princes or chiefs in northern and eastern Mongolia who are hostile to Russia.

The seriousness of the scheme of the Eastern Empire may be understood from an enumeration of its assets. Port Arthur, the military capital of this military empire, was reached by a line of railway extending six thousand miles from St. Petersburg. It was an "impregnable fortress"; and in Vladivostok, at an equal distance from St. Petersburg, the Eastern Empire had a stronghold of equal power and strength, whose name meant "the dominion or possession of the East." To transform a region so remote, from a jumble of nations and provinces into one empire, fully half a billion roubles were invested and spent, exclusive of armaments, at Port Arthur, Dalny, Kin-chou and Vladivostok; while fleets and armaments representing an equal amount were detached from the service of Russia in Europe to overawe the enemies of the Empire and to justify and defend it. In connection with the railways more than twenty steamers were operating between the principal ports.

In order to increase Russian wealth and influence, the

Russo-Chinese Bank was organized to promote commerce by loaning money for the purchase of Russian manufactures; by selling kerosene, sugar, etc., and was established in all the principal cities to promote to the utmost these endeavors. Manchuria was a country under-populated, and was a fair land whose bright prospects aroused official cupidity and lured Russian conspirators and adventurers on. At one time they asked China to allow the introduction of 10,000 Russian immigrants in a body for colonization. Communities of Russians were established in all the principal cities, although in the interior no city approached in the importance of its Russian interests that of Harbin, which on the eve of the war had attained a foreign population of 40,000. The ports of the Eastern Empire in the order of their importance were: Niu-ch'uang, because of its international commerce; Port Arthur, because it was the naval center and because of purely Russian ports it took the lead in commerce; Vladivostok and Dalny. All of these ports, except Niu-ch'uang, were wholly Russian, and besides the port of Niu-ch'uang, which the Eastern Empire administered, a port had been acquired in Korea—that of Yon-gampo on the Yalu—which the Russians rechristened Port Nicholas, while a coaling station in the important port of Masaipo was in possession of the Eastern Empire. The whole Russian population of Manchuria and Korea was close to 150,000. The value of this Eastern Empire as expressed in money already invested in Manchuria and Korea could not have been much less than one billion rubles at the opening of the war. The native wealth accumulated in cities and towns, the wealth of undeveloped resources, the value of production, the value of an established administration both civil and military, and other forms of wealth, were inestimable. That the real and potential wealth of the Empire was appreciated, however, by the Russians is proved

by the nature and extent of the machinery which they maintained to secure it. The navy was such as a first-class state might envy and was numerically superior in the beginning to the navy of the first-class Empire of Japan. There were fifty-nine ships of war and fourteen auxiliary steamers, besides tugs, etc., at all times in peace within call of and subject to the orders of the Czar's lieutenant at the head of the Eastern Empire at Port Arthur. And in the same manner could be added to this navy in war, the merchant fleet of the Chinese Eastern Railway, embracing twenty other vessels. When the war became a fact this vast fleet was further supplemented by torpedo boats and submarines brought overland from Russia, and by nearly the whole remaining deep-sea fleet of the Russian Empire in Europe which under Rodjestvensky was lost in the Sea of Japan. From first to last the Eastern Empire commanded in its defense, for it was never able to achieve the aggressive on sea, no less than one hundred and thirty-five ships of all kinds. With this machinery of conquest Russia, in the form of the Eastern Empire, at the beginning of 1904 had captured twenty-five millions of people and was in possession of and dominated a region as large as Continental Europe outside of Scandinavia and Russia. In addition to all the strength of their nation the Russians had the consent and good-will of France, Germany and Belgium, and other less important powers, and altogether the scheme was the greatest for the extension of empire that had developed for two hundred and sixty years in the East and could only be compared with the subjugation of China by the Manchus, or the exploits of the Mongol Khans of the Middle Ages. The power of Russian money, the force of Russian diplomacy, and the diplomacy of her allies and friends, and the demoralizing power lurking in preferment and decorations, as well as brute force, were all bent to the consummation of the Eastern Empire. All

## *The Russian Eastern Empire*

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previous attempts to break the East, and that had been abortive, were insignificant to this, and nations that admit Russia into the realm of civilization will marvel until history is forgotten, that when the entity of China and of Japan seemed conserved by them, only Russia dared by such a conspiracy and a shock of arms to break the Far East and to dissolve the ligature of strength which she apprehended in Japan to be the only barrier to unlimited conquest, or at least a conquest which she might share with her friends or dispose defensively to her enemies.

The prophecies of Germans and Britons made years before, that Manchuria was only a base for further operations, were fulfilled with a force that must have been astonishing even to the prophets. Manchuria was only a part of an empire that had a virtual king, anticipating a count-ship, which in all probability would have been that of Port Arthur. While "Count of Korea," "Count of Kuang-tung," and an endless catalogue of titles represented the aspirations of an equally endless roll of supporters. The administrators of the Eastern Empire at Port Arthur securely controlled all the mainland of their empire except Korea, which they viewed as the theater of their only existing difficulties. Here were large investments of Japanese capital in the form of railways and shipping and other interests, and Japanese influence was well intrenched.

Compared with the adventures of Russia in modern times Japanese adventures may be said to be recent. Thirty years ago the Japanese were exploring and mapping Manchuria in a way. There was a geographical society in Japan which as early as 1876 sent students to Manchuria through Niu-ch'uang. These students studied eagerly the foreign languages which they encountered there, and the making of maps was a qualification approved by the society which sent them. These preliminary adventurers were succeeded by

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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the promotion of trade, in which the Japanese were so successful in the decade preceding the war that the promoters of the Eastern Empire regarded themselves in a state of helplessness in the effort devised by De Witte and others to compete with the Japanese as well as with other traders. This conclusion led the military heads of the régime of the Eastern Empire to declare in October, 1903, that there was but one course, namely, to surround the Empire with arms. One of Alexeieff's generals announced that Russians were not a commercial people and were dependent upon force of arms for the preservation of their interests and must therefore take the region by force.

Such in substance was the Eastern Empire. In January, 1904, the Japanese of all classes began to withdraw from Manchuria. China's refusal to accept Alexeieff's new Convention of seven revolutionary demands, had, according to Russian logic, eliminated China from the questions affecting the Eastern Empire, and Alexeieff and his government turned their whole attention to what they believed to be the Korean question, upon which the Japanese permitted them to argue until the outbreak of the war, now imminent.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CAPITAL OF CONQUEST

THE aspect of Port Arthur, under a winter sky, was, at the beginning of 1904, something entirely new in the history of the Far East. In three months an army and a fleet had been assembled there, and as one detrained at the little station under Quail Hill from the Siberian Express, which lands European travelers upon the dock, there was such a scene of bustle, noise and flying steam and smoke, as to make it look like a Baltic port. The port of Port Arthur is small, and at that time the warships which crowded the harbor seemed to dwarf the hills which inclose it and towered into the sky at such close range that they gave one such an impression as the Cyclops might give if sitting in a pond with their feet against the shore—for Port Arthur harbor seemed a mere pond to these naval leviathans.

Leaving the station one passed a pile of perhaps ten thousand cases of vodka on the right, and now and then got a glimpse of the men-of-war, leaden and black against the hills. The sky-line on the east, south and west could at a glance be seen, crenelated with barracks and forts, while the stranger passed through a military kaleidoscope representing the personnel of every branch of the Russian forces, some afoot, some mounted, some in droshkys, and some—the humbler—in jinrikishas, and occasionally soldiers in squads and military police armed with sword and pistol. At the first carriage-stand my companion, who was the con-

ductor of the Siberian Express, suggested that we drop our jinrickshas, remarking that no one of consequence used these vehicles in Port Arthur, for they were only for the Chinese and soldiers.

Port Arthur wore the aspect of industry and commerce more than of hospitality, but aside from the maintenance of the garrison and fleet, industry appeared by the aspect of the streets to be represented mostly by the commerce in women. Hospitality was represented to the traveler in the meanest hotels which it was perhaps possible to exist among civilized men; while the homes of the people, in which hospitality was a notorious virtue, were so small and inadequate that it was only after long probation that the stranger might hope to be entertained there. As a rule, the agents of the railway exerted themselves in the interests of travelers, and the Chief of the Overland Express himself, who made it a point to be a "good fellow" en route, frequently accompanied the stranger to an hotel or to the wretched sheds which bore the name. One of these, which by its utter abandon and wretchedness, handed itself down to immortality in an incredibly brief time, was Effiemoff's. Arrived one was met by the name Effiemoff—nothing more; while Pushkin Skaia, the street without, led circuitously on to the Chinese town and was longer than any of the other streets.

The entrance to this place of Effiemoff looked like Doré's portrayal of the door of the Inferno; while the passage inside was as eloquent of hope abandoned as if that injunction had been written on the lintel. To make the place more cryptic, and to seal it with mystery, Effiemoff—whoever he might be—never appeared, unless it was at the guest's departure. A blackboard hung in the passageway upon which, if one had no card to post, was written the name of the guest in white chalk. From this spot extended two hallways at right angles, down which one might call with

echoing voice without being able to raise the living or the dead; but from somewhere would in time appear an usher whose spirits had themselves long ago been shamed out of countenance by the gloom of his guests, perhaps a young Chinese scalawag, such as wears his queue loose and unbraided at the neck and belongs to a class that in China are known as doubtful customers. Nothing but the prospect of personal gain tempts him to render you any service or to leave the mysterious haunt where he dwells. His employer, with true Russian indolence, first supplies him the example, and later, in pure admiration of his pupil's attainments, ever after strives but may never hope to equal his laziness. If the traveler looked promising and exceptionally helpless, he got at last into a cubby-hole room opening from one of these hallways and containing a dirty deal table, an iron cot and mattress, a pitcher and a wash-bowl. One of these rooms might further be ornamented by a little chromo of some Caucasian scene, or a brilliant poster advertising American beer. There was no carpet on the floor, which might not have been swept for a week and never had been scrubbed; and the one window of double sash, facing the door, was hermetically sealed, so that there was no ventilation for at least the whole winter season.

Travelers in the East carry their own bedding. Those who neglected to do this had the alternative of bribing the Chinese who manage such places—because they are superior to the Russians as managers—for bedding; and might also get tea, with unexcelled Russian sugar, very dirty from too much handling. If by any chance the traveler gave out money in advance he became the victim of their cupidity and avarice, and the only programme which he could successfully execute was such as he would execute in camping out.

One thing was required of the traveler—his passport. This disappeared into the interior of the establishment, from

where it was carried to the police department, viséed and returned, and remained in the possession of the hotel until the guest was expelled by the police or voluntarily departed—or until the guest paid his score—when it was tendered him along with his receipt, together with sincere affability and good-nature, in case the proprietor chose to himself appear. The tea was sloppy; the air was foul; the place was dark; everything was dirty; and it was not strange that travelers did not stay long, and that in the East Port Arthur got to have an unsavory name and fixed an ill-fame upon Russians which they do not perhaps justly deserve. It was an outpost raised in a day to a capital—rough, immoral, barbaric, weird.

The score paid, it remained to reckon with the Chinese servants, whose good-will it was best to buy before your baggage went out of the door, where, otherwise, if you understood Chinese, your ears would burn with your ignoble pedigree, previously constructed in the coolies' quarters in the rear.

"It is too bad," said my companion and guide, speaking of the place, "but they are all like this." This was too true, but one could not realize it. The prospect was so depressing and the fact so incredible that it aroused my suspicions. He was in uniform, and I am ashamed now to admit that his kindness threatened for a moment to be irksome. It was Ringel, kind, affectionate Ringel, whom I met afterward at the hospital in the battle area where my colleague and associate correspondent, Middleton, died, and where he had become an unwilling and abused artilleryman.

I stopped at Effiemoff's just long enough to call for hot water, which among Russians is always to be had from the samovar, and to shave. While I was in the midst of these operations a servant demanded my passport. I told him to wait awhile, and as I had no passport I speculated on how

## *The Capital of Conquest*

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long it would be before the police arrived and carried me off to the station-house. When I had finished shaving I locked my room and, armed with a letter to a countryman, took refuge in his house.

At the head of Port Arthur institutions was the Russo-Chinese Bank, at which all strangers had sooner or later to present themselves to lay in that large supply of paper rubles which was the "open sesame" to the Eastern Empire. This bank was the only foreign bank in Port Arthur and throughout Manchuria. It had branches in various parts of the world, but its methods were so primitive that it was a wonder to any American, or Briton, dependent upon it that his affairs were ever gotten through with. Its transactions were encumbered with a circumlocution which no Westerner could understand. It required not less than one hour to negotiate a draft on one of the bank's own branches, and it took an equal length of time to open an account of a few hundred rubles. The customer was bandied backward and forward from one end of the counting-room to the other, detained by cigarette-smoking clerks, some of them Chinese, scorning interest in the bank's customers.

The personnel of the bank was a motley collection of Russian and Chinese clerks of all sizes, who from morning to night fumbled among the papers, paper files, ledgers, etc., for something wanted. Papers, ledgers and moneys were contained in trays, baskets, cabinets and chests piled about on the floors and tables. A client watched the process of finding and losing checks, memorandums, receipts, orders, duplicates, sometimes for two hours before he would be able to leave the building. The employees seemed to occupy themselves with misunderstanding each other, talking in high tones "pidgin-Russian," "pidgin-English" and pure Russian and English. If one asked if he was being waited on he was told that he would have to wait. If there was any

system its only end was to prevent order and the execution of any piece of business promptly and in its turn. At any one of six desks where a deposit was received it was subject to misplacement and neglect. A customer always left the place in disgust and with a sense of great relief.

Scarcely less famous was Saratoff's, the leading restaurant, located in a low Chinese building facing the harbor. Dirty dragoons played billiards in their suspenders in the billiard-room and drank highly colored liquors from the zakouska bar in the adjoining dining-room, that looked to a stranger like a barber's sideboard behind a Covent Garden market booth, the liquors in bottles which ornamented it, gaudy as a rainbow. There was a glass-enclosed veranda forming a long breakfast room on the street.

At one time or another everybody who had occasion to visit a public dining place appeared at Saratoff's, and from generals down to the kindly and hospitable proprietor who met you at his door, these guests were a rich kaleidoscope of the agents, adventurers and hangers-on of the Eastern Empire. There was a dignified, quiet old gentleman, Mr. Balashoff, who had devoted his private fortune to the Red Cross, who always took his meals alone in a corner of the veranda, and who afterward distinguished himself during the siege.

Among the adventurers out of central Asia who were to be seen there at intervals, there were none more picturesque than Gromoff. He was an immense man and wore clothes still more immense. On his head a vast white sheep's wool busby, while over his great shoulders he delighted, especially upon his arrival by the Siberian Express, to hang an enormous fur mantle reaching to his spurs. Through the cartilage of his nose was a hole, the history of which was known from the Caspian to the Chih-li Sea and throughout the entire length of the Siberian and Manchurian railways, and referred to

## *The Capital of Conquest*

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an adventure in central Asia in which he had been made captive.

Entrancing as was the life that centered here, the visitor was never able to forget the greasiness of the butter, the dinginess of the table linen and the slovenliness of the waiters. No less interesting, and probably more amazing, was the feminine patronage of the place.

Leading east from Saratoff's along the Naval Basin were the Naval Hospital, music halls, *cafés chantant*, and at a point overlooking the naval dock was a little triangular park, large enough for a brass band and its audience. At the upper end of the park was the Viceroy's palace, cut off from the street by a high fence and shrubbery. In this place, which overlooked the bay, the fleet, the fortifications and the barracks of several thousand soldiers, hung a picture of Peter the Great, composed with a view of St. Petersburg in one distance, and a view of Port Arthur in the other. This conception, devised by the municipal architect, represented the Russian idea of an imperial domain which even the seas did not limit, but which they bound together. The palace itself was less conspicuous than a little church that stood on the crest of a hill behind it, and took the place of a cathedral until a pretentious structure deserving the name could be erected, together with an equally showy palace on the boundaries of the New Town.

The New Town, two miles to the west, was a feature of Port Arthur. Its population consisted principally of soldiers in barracks, who were convenient to the western forts. This town contained some improved streets, a few business buildings, and a number of homes occupied by the more fortunate merchants and officials. The Chinese town, a mile distant, joined Port Arthur on the north. As three Chinese may subsist upon what is wasted by one Occidental, and as many Chinese laborers were required on the public works, it is

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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possible that the Chinese town contained many tens of thousands.

The leading amusement was Baroffsky's circus in a permanent building, which contained a box opposite the orchestra for the use of the Viceroy, and closed its performance in time for the opening of the *cafés chantant*. The circus was located about half way between the naval basin and the Chinese town, and near it was a settlement of several hundred Japanese, whose numbers dwindled with the increase of war's alarms. Among them were agents of the Japanese military and civil departments, and the Russian authorities at this time cited two instances of attempts by the Japanese to burn coal stores in Port Arthur. As a result extra guards were set on all military stores and a state of official nervousness existed until the Japanese were taken away in a body by the Japanese Consul from Chee-foo. There was a circulating library on the water front, and a reading room on Pushkin Skaia opposite the post-office, in which was a great map of the Eastern Empire and the contiguous Empire of Japan, but not that of China. It was visited by peasants mostly and mechanics.

The telegraph offices were at the mouth of the Pushkin Skaia and a little farther along was the office of the *Novi Krai*, the official organ of the Government of the Eastern Empire, where literally clippings were made with sabers and paste dipped up with bayonets; and no man could indite a paragraph or compose a heading without his own military raiment, or without the presence of spurs and shoulder-straps; or indite a poem out of sound of the grounding of rifle butts.

Port Arthur, with its Asiatic motley, was as fit and deserving an object for caricature as any ever to have been found in America in the early days. The streets were not those of a modern city any more than were the buildings, which were those of a dilapidated Old World town. For the most

part they might have been likened to a Kansas barnyard, where, instead of poultry—bantams, top-knots, Shanghais—men of the rarest and most spectacular varieties swaggered about among cattle, horses, goats, geese, dust and droshkys. Everywhere was the new, the ungainly, unfinished, the bare, the noisy, and the crude; and the Occidental traveler was jostled by the old-fashioned idea and the new idea in the riotous uncontrol of primitive force.

I had not been long in this riotous frontier capital until I was entertained at dinner in a Russian home. It was the Russian Christmas. The style was entirely Russian, as the host explained, in order to give an idea of what Russian food was like. The home was part of a converted Chinese house, so tiny that hospitality under the circumstances was an especial virtue even for a Russian. The food was *a la Russe*, the conversation in the Russian tongue, and for the first time I had an insight into what the war feelings of the people were. I had the uncomfortable experience of hearing the Japanese disparaged and unreasonably belittled. Their achievements were minimized and they were bitterly reproached even to the glorification of the Russians. The greatness, benevolence and power of Russia, and the strength and glory of the Eastern Empire was not more emphasized than was the littleness, presumption and conceit of the Japanese. Three of the other guests were foreigners—either merchants or in the service of the Government, and it was not strange that no argument was offered against this disparagement of an enemy. Amid such strong defenses, under the palace of the Viceroy, in the capital of the Eastern Empire, under the shield of a great navy, equal to that of Japan, it was not unnatural that they should feel secure as well as superior to the despised little island nation six hundred miles away. Having campaigned with the Japanese I had never been able to understand the scurrilous disdain and contempt that

not only Russians, but certain other Western peoples, such as the French, expressed against this—the oldest military nation in existence. What struck the observer among the Russian inhabitants of the Eastern Empire was their envy of the political and industrial success of the Japanese Empire, and their illogical animosity to her military proclivities and her anxiety and keenness to fight her own battles, and it was easy to see that this had its origin in the apprehension of Japan's commercial if not military supremacy at last.



Cossack saddle

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MACHINERY OF CONQUEST—EMPIRE AT PORT ARTHUR

**P**ORT ARTHUR as the stage of this world drama, deserves more than a passing notice.

Port Arthur is now immortal, and the name as that of a military capital arrests attention as the first in the history of a political drama in East Asia two and one-half centuries old. Port Arthur was itself a world drama. In population it consisted of the soldiers, 18,000; of the men on the ships, averaging 18,000; the workmen on the docks, 2,000; and the women, of whom there was an average of one to each officer. Then there were those who catered to these, which embraced the commercial element, part of whom were Chinese and Japanese. Port Arthur was then the wonder of the East. Travelers said that nowhere except in America had they seen the like of such activity, though they did not always take cognizance that this resulted wholly from an expenditure of Government moneys and not from commerce. Port Arthur, in fact, resembled more nearly than anything else a section of Chicago's worst streets. In her mart was spent the largesse of the Government, not the fair gains of commerce and industrial enterprise. Like Vladivostok, it was crowded with officials, nearly wholly military, because it had intended to be exclusively a fortress capital. These officials were men acceptable to Alexeieff and generally agreeable to the schemes and adventures of the promoters of the Eastern Empire, although there were opponents to the Empire's course in the service. Wiser, though perhaps not more honest, the first builders of Dalny and Port

Arthur repudiated the schemes of the imperial adventurers, even going so far as to denounce Alexeieff and retire to Russia.

Supreme in point of public interest was the person and character of Alexeieff himself. Little was known of him in the East, except what was carried from Europe, until he became the embodiment of that power which closed Manchuria to travelers in the beginning of 1901. He had been before this commander of a small war vessel, but was now the king of an empire, with an army and navy, to hold in his grasp the alternatives of peace and war. It was told of him that once one of his lieutenants killed himself rather than be subjected to such an indomitable temper and fierceness as he possessed. This story came from the unfortunate man's friends. It was Alexeieff who executed the conspiracy of the promoters of the Eastern Empire and usurped the Imperial Russian Legation at Peking in 1903. It was by him, through his agent, that were spoken perhaps the hardest words ever said to the Chinese in the long history of their relations to foreign powers. This was when the envoy of the Viceroy Alexeieff told the Chinese Foreign Office that had refused the Convention for permanent occupation of Manchuria presented by Alexeieff, that they had no other course but to accept it, which they might do at their leisure.

It was too short a time during January for a stranger to prove or disprove for himself the qualities attributed to Alexeieff or to his associates, who were at Port Arthur manipulating the fortunes of the Eastern Empire. Upon the eve of war he passed for a hypochondriac among the members of his cabinet and all subordinates, and it was generally believed that he dreaded the consequences of his own acts and feared the responsibilities of war into which Russia and the Eastern Empire were drifting. When war came he addressed the troops in the fortifications and made a show of courage, but

after the first attack on Port Arthur by the Japanese fleet, his career was like that of a disappearing meteor. Retiring to Mukden, where his civil domain gradually disappeared, he landed at last finally in a hotel in St. Petersburg. Before this last event he made a pilgrimage to Vladivostok to welcome the Port Arthur fleet, which had escaped from Port Arthur with the intention of joining the Vladivostok squadron. As is well known this fleet never reached its destination, and Alexeieff arrived at Vladivostok to attend a memorial service to Admiral Vitgeft, commander of the fleet, who had lost his life in the adventure; and on the next day to receive the wounded commander of the *Rossia* and the dead body of the captain of the *Rurik*. After these ceremonies he disappeared from the East and for many months was known as the "Viceroy of the Hotel de l'Europe" in St. Petersburg, where he eagerly questioned newspaper reporters and travelers regarding the strength of the Japanese forces before Mukden; and the last public record of his Eastern affairs was the cutting off of his viceroyal salary and his retirement as a member of the Council of the Empire.

This brief history is comprised within the space of four years. It has been stated by Russians as one of the weaknesses of the Eastern Empire that Alexeieff did not have the confidence of his subordinates. He was declared to be named and numbered for assassination by the fighting revolutionists. He could not be tried for his life—not being a military officer; oblivion was all he could expect in Russia—there was not even that qualified gratitude and recognition such as Stoessel afterward received to welcome him.

In importance next to the Viceroy, because he was the commandant of the fortress, may be mentioned General Stoessel. Calls at his house were persistently ineffectual. Communications addressed to him elicited no acknowledgment, and a cabinet officer advised callers that the General

was not a wholly agreeable man and that it was generally best to avoid asking anything of him and to go ahead quietly on one's business about the city. "General Stoessel," said he, "does not like what the English and American papers say about us, and he would therefore naturally be hostile to you. In fact, he seldom grants any favors, even to ourselves." Stoessel's part was that of a man who had nothing to ask, for he was master of a whole fortress of guns, ammunition and barricades.

Stoessel's place was probably with the mediævals. He did not seem a man of the present age, because, perhaps, like many of the Russian generals, he belonged to a past military system and to traditions which the military history of the past ten years has shown to be obsolete. He boasted his willingness to die for the autocratic idea rather than for the rights of anything, and during the siege of Port Arthur made the moral and military error of boasting that his defenses would be his tomb, and then failed to justify the boast. The Russians in the streets and the clubs disliked him for his ultra-Russianism. "These Germans," said they, "are always more Russian than we ourselves." They said that he flattered the men in the ranks, that the men knew it and disliked him. His local ill-fame seemed to spring from a dislike of the German character. It is a fact that the Germans believe in the great destiny of the Russians, and this was probably the greatest fault of the German-Russians throughout the army, who exercised so much influence, furnished so much ability, and bore so much criticism.

Stoessel adhered to his military calling. He personally dispatched the troops, which he could so illy spare, that were the first to reach the Yalu. He was a conspicuous figure at the railway station during these departures in January, because of his size and dominating personality. His career as the defender of Port Arthur was regarded by the army as

creditable, though it could not forgive him for surrendering. Perhaps the severest indictment of the characters of the conspirators and promoters of the Eastern Empire is that made by the St. Petersburg Government in its verdict concerning him, for General Stoessel was not less incompetent, only more conspicuous than many others. A military court tried him for the offense of having surrendered a Russian fortress and recommended that he be dismissed from the army and shot. He was permitted by the Emperor to resign.

Admiral Stark was the commandant of the fleet, and his flagship, as well as his house, was the busy theater of social drama. It was at his house that the reception on the occasion of his wife's birthday took place on the night of the first Japanese attack. He was a conspicuous, if not the most prominent, leader in Port Arthur society. The impression of the outside world regarding the dissipations of the fleet are probably justified by the numbers of petticoats that swarmed up the gangplanks and in the companionways, and by the naval debauchees left hapless on the docks because of a night of dissipation ashore, unable to reach their ships and participate in the repulse of the Japanese on the morning of February 9th. But it would be hard to judge the character of the man by the fact that in the eyes of the Government at St. Petersburg he was found wanting, and because he disappeared from view within a month after trial.

Of Prince Uktomsky, one of the founders of the Russo-Chinese Bank and author of "Russia's Mission in Asia," who afterward became admiral of the fleet, and of the captains of the fleet, little was heard at that time aside from their social adventures.

Admiral Witgeff, who little deserved the fate which overtook him, was an agreeable and kindly man, sitting patiently in the Naval Office.

Grevy, Admiral of the port, was a man whose name was on the tongues of all, because he held endless confabs in his office at the Naval Basin, with committees and councils, and heads of departments and merchant contractors, and had to do with all the privileges of the water and the water front. The officers who distinguished themselves in the siege, such as Folk and Kondratenko, had not come to light, and the names of some generals of land forces that participated in all the battles to the end of the war, were only occasionally mentioned. Grevy escaped from Port Arthur after the first attack and became the Admiral of the port at Vladivostok.

On the front of Quail Hill was the house of Colonel Vershinen, Mayor of Port Arthur. The house was filled from floor to ceiling with relics of the invasion of China in 1900 which had evidently been largely collected during the occupation of Peking by the allies. Colonel Vershinen, like many Russian imperialists of the milder type, was an enthusiastic student of Oriental things. He was the most easily accessible official in Port Arthur, perhaps because he was interested in having a good impression of the place carried abroad. He accompanied visitors about the city to point out municipal improvements, which he was vainly at that time trying to carry on without funds, and the efforts to beautify the bare brown hills which load the winds with dust throughout the whole year. Less of an adventurer than most of the Czar's agents who have served in many parts of the Empire, especially in Central Asia and Kashgaria, Colonel Vershinen, the amiable, scholarly Cossack, was something of a student and belonged to that class of Russian officials who become archæologists and naturalists. This is because the ancient cities embraced in the Russian Empire offer great opportunities for such study and give relief from the schemes of imperial adventure. Though he had his detractors, who

## *The Machinery of Conquest*

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regarded him as a traitor, Alexieff was his friend. Among the interesting statements which he made was that the authorities were anxious to prevent any convicts from the Saghalen penal colony from entering Port Arthur. He gave this as a reason why all passports were so rigorously scrutinized! There was not, he said, a single ex-convict in the city. Although there was an epidemic of crime at that moment in the Chinese city, it was, he said, owing to the lack of work caused by the suspension of municipal improvements. Although this led to the consideration of war, the point was carefully avoided. The Mayor was of the opinion that the danger of war had somewhat abated.

Like a star resplendent in this galaxy of imperial Russian big-wigs, was the chief of police, who, seated in a troika, might be seen at a given hour every afternoon, racing ostentatiously through the principal thoroughfares, dressed in a gray busby, a long gray military cape, sword, boots and spurs. His three gray horses, running like mad, careered along the Naval Basin, the water front, and up Pushkin Skaia to the circus, where they wheeled about and returned over the same course. Nearly every foreign visitor to Port Arthur at this time had more or less to do with this official, whose agents bulldozed and blackmailed all, even the residents.

In Port Arthur in January merchants had staked money in a bet among themselves as to whether a certain young Jew who made it his business to secure contracts from Government officials would be allowed to remain in Port Arthur. His business was to buy and sell public officials of the highest rank, including generals, and his operations had become such a scandal that he had retired for a time to console himself with perhaps the most beautiful woman of the town. He returned, however, unmolested, and continued his operations with success until the opening of war.

Here was all the evidence of the sordid—men living in

extravagance in the meanest houses on riches which they wrung from their victims like so many tigers and wolves.

The most distinguished merchant of Port Arthur was Gensberg, who, as a young man named Mess, left Russia to avoid military service, which as a Jew he abhorred, and went to Japan, where he changed his name and became a merchant-shipper. When Port Arthur commenced to flourish he removed to that place, where his talent made the firm of Gensberg & Co. the leading one. He remained until after the outbreak of the war, when his alarm took him all the way back to his old home. The authorities had not molested him—he was too old for military service—and in recognition of his services to the Eastern Empire, in getting in coal for the fleet, the Government forgave him and conferred some kind of distinction upon him, and he went back to his old mother in Russia. He thoroughly believed in Japanese success, and as he thoroughly believed in the approaching war, was daily alert for news of Japanese attack.

One of the most startling figures among the officials of Port Arthur was Colonel Artemieff, editor of the official paper—the *Nova Krai*—the organ of Admiral Alexeieff and the Eastern Empire. The *Nova Krai* was the only newspaper in Port Arthur, and it was befitting the character of this organ that its editor always appeared in military uniform. It was the fashion in Port Arthur, as it was in the capitals of Europe, to make official calls in evening clothes. One rode out in a cold carriage, over the bleak hills, in a cutting wind, and kicked one's heels at a back gate in an alleyway while making an engagement with Chinese servants to meet whomsoever it was desired to see. At the appointed hour one entered by way of some miniature and mysterious storeroom or pantry, and passed through the kitchen and into a vestibule, there to divest oneself of heavy

## *The Machinery of Conquest*

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garments, after which one would be ushered into some low-ceilinged, gloomy reception room, which at that time was certain to be almost filled by a Christmas tree. This was the situation when I called at Colonel Artemieff's house, for it was the Russian Christmas Day.

The house was set in an excavation in the side of a steep rocky hill. When the Colonel came in he wore all of his military accouterments except his cap. He was a short, thickset man, a little pale. As he had received a letter from me he told me that he would do whatever he could toward making me known in the places where it was important I should be known in order to carry on my work. He was of opinion that if I appreciated Russian interests the Alexeieff government would be only too glad to have itself represented in the newspapers, especially through the Associated Press, which, he understood, used my dispatches. By way of filling up a pause I told him that there would be no difficulty on that score as I was in Port Arthur to conform to whatever regulations the administration thought best to impose for its own interests. I said, as well, that whatever he might do for me would be appreciated. I then inquired as to the report that several warships had just left the harbor with sealed orders. He said that it was true, that they had gone to meet four Japanese ironclads that were approaching Korea and an additional ship, he said, was at that moment leaving Port Arthur. As this had but one meaning, I asked the Colonel about the prospect of war. He was hopeful that war could be avoided.

It had been announced in Peking that Japan had required of Russia an answer to her demands by January 4th, which was equal in effect, according to the outside world, to an ultimatum. Colonel Artemieff made a comment upon this report which was a perfect expression of the Russian standpoint in the contentions which had led to war. "Japan,"

he said, "is not a country that can give an ultimatum to Russia, and Russia could not receive an ultimatum from a country like Japan." Such was the Russian view, from the highest to the lowest official in Port Arthur.

Colonel Artemieff promised to send me a letter that would introduce me to the civil governor of the city, Grombschewsky. This official received visitors between the hours of five and seven in the morning. As this was before dawn, very few people ever went to see him. Colonel Artemieff said he himself would be in his office in the afternoon and would see me there, or at his home, in the evening, in case of anything of importance. Many things of importance soon occurred, and then Colonel Artemieff considered it necessary to excuse himself upon the ground that he was serving a rival concern.

My next call was at the house of Baron de Stuart, social secretary to His Excellency, Viceroy Alexeieff. It took two visits to find the house, which seemed at all times to be empty; and presumably the Viceroy's social enterprises were interminable. In consequence Baron de Stuart must be at the Viceroy's residence. The Chinese servants in the streets directed me, and the second day I found the house, but I was obliged to call again, after having taken occasion to leave a letter in the letter-box asking for an interview. The third time I called at the house, the veranda was filled with old newspapers, dust, feathers, and such trash as the wind would whirl about, while a rumpled cock and a few hens patrolled the little yard. The scouring-soap had run from the brass plate where the Baron's name was posted, leaving a dirty residue. When I dropped my card into the letter-box it struck the bottom with a lonesome metallic click. This time I was unable to rouse any servants. I ultimately found the Baron, but it was after I had walked unceremoniously but socially into his house. Once in, I had interviews with

several servants and a general discussion of the Baron's domestic habits. The Baron himself then appeared, and I found him very affable and obliging so far as his power went, and this seemed to go just nowhere, as he was merely the master of social affairs.

A little farther up the street, beyond the Viceroy's house, lived De Plancon, whom I had known at Peking, where he was chargé d'affaires. De Plancon was the Viceroy's diplomatic agent and secretary. I next called upon him. It was in the afternoon, and I found his house in a narrow, precipitous lane. I had stood several minutes ringing his door-bell, when he came up behind me from the direction of the Viceroy's palace. He recognized me at once and called me by name. Almost his first words were an inquiry—"You have come from Peking to Port Arthur because you think something is going to happen. But I don't think so. Why should there?" he went on, forcing ahead a conversation on his doorstep where he seemed anxious to discuss the whole situation, especially in relation to my presence in Port Arthur. I was overwhelmed almost before I could enter his house. He said he was glad to see me, but why did I think something was going to happen? There was no reason. Russia did not want war. Russia did not care what Japan did in Korea. He could see no sense—no reason. It was all such nonsense—such a mistaken idea—such foolishness. "Japan," he said, "should devote herself to building up her industrial and national life, and should not meddle in other people's affairs. Russia had been very patient—magnanimous; now if Japan would not be quiet Russia would"—and here he brought his open hand down with a smashing motion—"Russia would smash her."

This gave me a cold chill as I thought of the peaceful pretensions of St. Petersburg and of the Czar's professions, not to mention the vaunted humanity of our times. De

Plancon then invited me in and apologized for the disordered condition of his house, which was being repaired, and asked me to sit down in his office, which was unfinished, uncarpeted, littered with papers, and presented an austere, temporary aspect like a barrack room. Such were the quarters of most of the officials of Port Arthur. In fact they seemed with everything else the mere utensils of war.

At this moment I had an opportunity to state my business, which was to make myself known to the proper authorities, for up to the present, I had had no definite idea who they were. I had called on a few of the lower officials, but no one had dared to point out the man above others to whom I should appeal. Here at any rate was a man near to the Viceroy, and to him I stated my position. De Plancon said he had received applications from several sources for permission to accompany the Russian forces, but, he said, with emphasis, "There is no reason why. There is no cause. There will be no war." He showed me a telegram received from a London news agency asking, in view of the approaching hostilities, permission for a correspondent to accompany the Russian troops. Underneath this message was written an official reply, to the effect that as hostilities were not expected, therefore permission to accompany the troops would be premature. He next handed me the card of a correspondent of a London paper, who had called upon him and represented himself as pro-Russian. "This is not what we want," said De Plancon, "we don't want a man to be pro-Russian, we only want correspondents to tell the truth. Only tell the truth." He was visibly disgusted with this correspondent and colleague of mine, whom I did not know, and it was evident from his manner that he had about despaired of meeting the kind of correspondent in whom confidence could be placed.

Russians are justly suspicious of the claims of foreigners

to conversion to Russian ideas, for the official Russian knows with considerable accuracy in just what estimation he is held by outsiders. De Plancon talked extensively, and was one of the few agents of the Eastern Empire who regarded the affairs of that great conspiracy as possible of discussion open and above board. It was hard to understand, because the official Russian in the East is as a rule reticent on official matters. De Plancon was more surprising when he said that from him could be had the truth, and was a little staggered at the visible incredulity with which his remark was received. In Peking De Plancon had told the truth about Manchuria. He foretold, in general, the results of the opposition of the powers to Alexeieff's last demands upon China. He said emphatically that the fuss made by America, England and Japan would only make Russia sit tighter in Manchuria and never leave it, and that this would benefit no one but Russia, for which reason all the outside fuss was very foolish. At this time he avoided the discussion of Japan's contention about Manchuria and denied that Japan had any claims to make regarding Manchuria. Japan, said he, would be satisfied with whatever concessions Russia made to her in Korea. He enunciated that it was by agreement about Korea that peace would be determined. The excitement of the moment, for Japan was then carrying on active military movements in Korea, was contagious. He admitted that Japan was making demonstrations—demonstrations intended to scare Russia, he said, on the coast of Korea, and landing small bodies of soldiers, which was contrary to convention. "But," he added, "we don't want to meddle with what Japan does in Korea."

As these statements and enunciations came directly from Alexeieff's palace, they represent the last phase of the conspirators' resolution before war. They show that their Government was in effect awed by the realization that they

had precipitated war, and that in their first alarm they were disposed to retrench. In representing that there was no unreasonableness in the Japanese being content with concessions in Korea, the wish was undoubtedly father to the thought. The expressions made by this minister of the Eastern Empire were inspired by the rapid progress to war. But no Russian official in Port Arthur admitted the true cause of Japanese grievance. Russian pride and Russian arrogance would not permit it. In justice to them it must be said that they were aware of the dangerous nature of approaching events, however ill-judged were their conclusions on the outcome. The highest officials were at the same time very nervous about the actual outbreak and the way it should be brought about, and their apprehension was certainly justified by the disgraceful manner in which they precipitated it, and the scandalous incompetency with which they met it. And at this moment the high officials were nerving each other for the ordeal which was to introduce the Eastern Empire to the world.

The Viceroy at this time was represented as being extremely busy and much worried, and was being constantly applied to by strangers for audiences. Needless to say, no outsiders were able to see him then or at any time thereafter in Port Arthur. When an American general asked for an interview a few days later he was told that the Viceroy was ill. The next report was that the Viceroy was nervous, afraid of contagion, and was going about his room like a hypochondriac spraying the doors and windows with eau de Cologne, and giving orders to the servants intended to guard the place from infection. These indispositions, due to the political situation, were soon followed by the outbreak of war.

## CHAPTER V

### FLEDGING THE EASTERN EMPIRE

DE PLANCON had just returned from a cabinet meeting at which were present the generals and all heads of the military departments of the administration of Manchuria, then in Port Arthur. At this meeting a plan of mobilization and of military organization was drawn up, and lists ordered to be made of every available man of the organization of 80,000 reserves in Manchuria and of such as it was impossible to remove from civil duties. A few hours before 4,000 men were ordered to proceed northward to Liao-yang, while Harbin was selected for the temporary army staff headquarters. The 4,000 soldiers began moving the next day; some by train and some boarding the transports in the bay.

At Christmas the shops and hongs closed, most of them for three days' holiday. The streets were lined with flags. The warships in the harbor, now busy as floating ant-hills, both by day and by night, while coaling up and clearing for expected action, were decorated from stem to stern. The warships had been in war-paint since October, and only the schoolship *Rasboinik*, commanded by Prince Leven, and two or three old gunboats were still in their summer paint. It was apparent that the Government of the Eastern Empire apprehended an attack or a landing of Japanese troops while they were engaged in their holiday revelries. Special precautions were in force, particularly in regard to the use of the harbor and the harbor entrance. Of these, shippers and navigators complained continually. Before January 10th

six Japanese ships, under contract to bring coal to Port Arthur, canceled their contracts in Japan, where they were already loaded, and transferred themselves to the service of their Government. Japanese passenger lines canceled their Port Arthur sailings and their agents announced that no ships would take their places. It became immediately known at Port Arthur that all the shipping interests of Japan had tendered their steamers to their Government. But these, and other events, had not yet aroused excitement in Port Arthur so far as the populace was concerned. The people in the street knew nothing of the ultimatum that had been already made known in Peking, nor did they observe anything unusual taking place in the harbor.

The day after Christmas one of the war vessels in the harbor shipped a small body of men and sailed for Korea, landing at Chemulpo. They proceeded to Seoul, against some opposition, it was reported, from the Japanese operating the Seoul-Chemulpo Railway. Troops of other nations which, like these, were intended to guard their legations in Seoul, were likewise landed. Wild rumors reached Port Arthur to the effect that the Emperor of Korea was dead, and that Japanese troops had been landed at Mokpho.

On account of the nature of events the Viceroy prepared to concentrate troops on the Yalu, and for this purpose sent a division commander there to select a site for a camp. By January 15th war was regarded by those heretofore doubtful outside of Port Arthur as a "proximate contingency." In the Far East it was admitted that the declaration of war by Japan hung upon her convictions as to her own chances of winning. In Port Arthur little could be learned of the actual state of negotiations. In the hinterland there was more than the usual excitement. The United States Government, recognizing an emergency, had exchanged ratifications of the American-Chinese commercial treaty with China which

affected Manchuria, by telegraph—an unusual proceeding. The Yokohama Specie Bank was withdrawing its branches from Dalny, Harbin, Niu-ch'uang and Vladivostok. Japanese merchants throughout the Eastern Empire were sending their families back to Japan, and the Japanese civil officials in Manchuria were in a demoralized and nervous state from anxiety to get their people out of the country, as well as on account of the demands of their Government for reliable information of the operations of the Government of the Eastern Empire.

The Chinese Eastern Railway Company's steamship service in the East had now begun to feel the demoralization which precedes an outbreak of hostilities, and one of the company's steamers was already laid up at Dalny awaiting orders from the Viceroy, and was expecting, day by day, to ship troops destined for Korea, or to join the auxiliary force of the fleet. Its officers were entertaining their friends at a feast laid out in the passengers' saloon, where the ship was moored at the lonely pier two miles from the Dalny settlement. The place was reached by the aid of a nishvoshtik, or droshky, which could be hailed from the head of the main street leading from the hotel to the station. These vehicles, whose drivers were able to apprehend a fare from a great distance because fares were so rare in Dalny, dashed like mad down the windy street in a contest for the fare as exciting as a chariot race. In this respect Dalny was in great contrast to Port Arthur, where one walked to the carriage stand and often employed corrupt and humiliating persuasion in getting a carriage.

As with all droshkys in Manchuria, there was hitched with an old but still fiery mongol horse often a wild young trace-mate which cavorted like an unbroken mustang. With furious speed, threatening to plunge into passing carts, into telegraph poles and over declivities, it required an hour and a half to

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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reach the pier and return via the streets that were laid out and intended to be the civil City of Dalny. One covered miles of streets and avenues, crossed and woven like a spider's web, with here and there a large showy fly in the shape of a prospective café, hotel, or, sometimes, a residence. They seemed very foolish flies, apparently, for Dalny, already widely advertised, had attracted no residents, no trade, and no interest, except that attached to a great example of erring judgment, such as has heretofore been exhibited principally in the new regions of America, where promoters attempt to set up huge cities in the wrong places.

For an hour and a half one was snatched through this windy desolation of forbidding winter streets and débris, which might be said to have been strewn with corner lots. The excursion in vigor and excitement was like a flight from Siberian wolves.

There was nothing to Dalny at that time except the docks, the official settlement, including a hotel, a small menagerie, a railway terminus and a native market. Upon the eve of the war, Dalny fulfilled the expectations of those who, visiting it for the first time, brought with them a recollection of all the hard things which the critics of Russia's Eastern Empire had said about the place. It was winter. There was no commerce. The harbor was half covered over and blocked with ice, through which the tugboats wrestled for an hour to reach the shore. Public improvements were suspended; workmen were anxious and hungry. The palms of employees of the Government and the railways were itching for the rubles of the traveler. Dalny was preparing with leanness and hunger for the miseries which the outbreak of war brought and the nearly total extinction accompanying Japanese success.

Following the holidays there was a relaxation from the restrictions resulting from a fear that the Japanese might

take hostile advantage of the occasion. Soldiers and sailors were still deprived of drink, but the officers who had been confined to their ships again frequented the restaurants, circus and music halls. The Viceroy had now been "ill" for about a week—which being interpreted, meant that affairs had reached an acute stage. It was a matter of general belief that the Russian Government, no less than the heads of the Eastern Empire, had by this time become heartily sick of their political game and were sincerely hoping that Japan would by some miracle vanish from the earth, or, what seemed only a little more feasible, accommodate herself to Russia's programme. The Viceroy received only his secretaries. The social functions at the palace were annulled at this time. One of the Viceroy's ministers thought it best to postpone all matters not directly affecting affairs with the Japanese to a more favorable opportunity, which showed that all business except the urgent consideration of peace or war had been eliminated. This minister opened some Chinese papers and called attention to the bias of the editors, and particularly to what was claimed in one of them to be an account of a meeting of the Asiatic Council at St. Petersburg, in which the Czar was made to exclaim dramatically before the members of the Council in regard to Manchurian matters and his own contention for peace: "Am I Emperor, or am I not?" "These words," said the minister, "are a part of one of Tolstoi's plays—which is their only source."

An editorial in the same paper on "the situation" was based, he said, on false information—dispatches apparently from Japanese papers, giving fabricated particulars of acts of Russian aggression, which he pronounced ridiculous and impossible. "How can they say such things? Tell me, is there a single correspondent who is not in the pay of the Japanese? You are a correspondent—now tell me, is there a single one? In Russia," said he, "everything is open and

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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frank. There are no secrets in Russia. If you go there you will see it for yourself. So in Manchuria and Korea, even a schoolboy knows. Every one can see what is done. There are no underhanded schemes."

The *Nova Krai* on the following day in its editorials took bitter exception to the articles in the Chinese papers, some of which were attacks of a most scurrilous nature. These the editor of the *Nova Krai* characterized as "reptilian." There was one article in particular which concluded with the prophecy that through Japan Russia would be reduced to a condition comparable with that which Turkey then occupied in Europe. These barbarous flings exasperated the long-suffering Russians, and the editors of the press of the Eastern Empire, who had generally ignored the anathema of the foreign press in the East, now took up the cudgels and hit back. Simultaneous with the "irreducible minimum" or so-called ultimatum, which on January 4th Japan had presented to Russia, several war measures had been instituted in Japan, knowledge of which had reached Port Arthur. First, there was the mobilization of the merchant marine, including all the principal lines, namely, those reaching Europe, Australia and America. Second, the doubling of the land tax rates, providing for a revenue of 44,000,000 yen. Third, the laying of military railways about the military harbors of Nagasaki and elsewhere, to facilitate military dispatch. A reply was made to Japan's ultimatum which was in substance as follows:

1. Japan is to be accorded various concessions in Korea.
2. Japan is allowed to deal with southern Korea economically or strategically as her interests may require.
3. Russia leaves Japan full commercial freedom in northern Korea, but neither there nor in southern Korea shall Japan permanently occupy fortresses, whether on the coast or in the interior.

4. A neutral 50-kilometer zone shall be established on the Yalu and Tumen rivers, where neither Japan nor Russia may erect fortresses. The Straits of Korea (Tsushima) are to be neutral and free from Russian ships.

5. Russia accepts no conditions in reference to Manchuria, but she is ready to accord Japan and other powers, representation for their commercial interests.

There was a subsequent announcement that Russia was reported to have made some concessions in regard to Clause 5, though insisting on the proposal contained in Clause 4. In Port Arthur these concessions on the part of Russia indicated that Japan had irrevocably determined upon a programme which did not take the further discussion of these matters into account. Russia renewed her assurances to the Powers that she would respect all rights granted them by China in Manchuria, as expressed in their treaties. The impression which the observer in Port Arthur received from the attitude and conduct of the cabinet and high officials was that the Russians had reached a mental state best expressed by the word "fatalism," and that while they believed that war was inevitable and necessary, they confidently relied upon the power of the Eastern Empire and of Russia.

It was semi-officially announced in the outside world that the Japanese note, characterized as an ultimatum, intimated that no further communications would be addressed to Russia, and that Japan would wait only a reasonable time before taking whatever measures she considered necessary to safeguard her own interests. It was pointed out that Japan was unable to accept the restrictions which Russia desired to place upon strategic measures which Japan might propose to take in Korea, as well as her inability to entertain the idea of a neutral zone. It seemed to be perfectly plain to all the world that the Japanese Government kept constantly to the fore Japanese rights and interests beyond the Yalu.

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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With equal obstinacy, combined with scorn of these solicitations, Russia persisted in the sole discussion of Korean affairs.

In this deadlock the following announcement was reported from St. Petersburg: "Alexeieff urges temporary settlement by diplomatic means, arguing that Russia's geographical position and military strength must in course of time secure for her the status she claims, and no artificial barrier can long prevent this; but her land forces, which are Russia's main strength, are at present insufficiently represented in the Far East. This once remedied would gradually solve itself in Russia's favor, whereas a campaign now would seriously check the natural course of things."

At the end of January it was felt in Port Arthur that the destiny of the Eastern Empire was being manipulated by an evil hand in St. Petersburg. The administration in Port Arthur had done all the unwarlike things expected of it. It had carried out an overbearing policy not only toward Japan but toward all powers interested in Manchuria for a period of years, and had hectored and threatened Japan with all the diplomatic and military force and prestige which it could muster, even going so far as to enlist Russia's European friends in the undertaking. The announcements from St. Petersburg at this time were of a tenor which exactly coincided with the impression existing at Port Arthur, that the Government of the Eastern Empire was nervous and apprehensive and loath to risk its holdings in war. At the same time a general had been sent to select a camp on the Yalu for concentrating an army, and had returned. The Naval Council ordered stores for immediate delivery, and the admirals held a council on January 20th. The army asked for additional horses to equip the mounted infantry and cavalry, and the accumulation of war stores began. Port Arthur authorities confiscated horses, and women organized Red



The hurry to get the fleet out of Port Arthur harbor into the roadstead in obedience to orders from St. Petersburg



Cross schools. On January 30th an order came from St. Petersburg for the fleet to move out of the harbor, but owing to the carelessness of the Admiral of the Port the execution of the order was delayed until January 31st, when a cruiser and battle-ship moved out and would have been followed by the entire squadron had there been sufficient depth of water at the entrance. On the same day the Third Infantry Brigade began to entrain at the railway station and to proceed to Liao-yang from where it was to move to the Yalu.

The actual provisions for war in the Eastern Empire were considerable. Vladivostok, Port Arthur, Dalny and the Kin-chou Isthmus were fortified and a fleet in military readiness was scouting the waters of all the seas and harbors, including, of course, those of Korea, where a squadron made its rendezvous at Chemulpo to awe and guard the Korean capital. The whole of Korea north of Ping-yang had been explored and mapped during the summer by Colonel Madridoff, who, according to General Ian Hamilton, was known to the Japanese as "Matoriroff." A scheme of defense of the Empire was in existence and the plan of fortifying the Yalu was in operation. Mobilization of the army was in progress and a comprehensive plan of campaign was in process of evolution.

At this time the reports of the concentration of Russian troops that circulated in the outside world were, naturally, greatly exaggerated; but one could get a good idea of what the increase of the military forces were by contact with the traffic on the railway. Winter railway travel in the Liao-tung Peninsula, especially by the Siberian Express trains, was nearly luxurious. The passengers were almost wholly, by this time, Russian officers, who talked much in praise of the New Empire and in particular of the cities of the Kuang-tung Peninsula, and the improvements visible from the car windows. They were proud of the military roads about the

Bay of Ta-lien and the fortifications at Kin-chou, where the Isthmus was so narrow that gunboats could fire from shore to shore. At this time there was a good deal of travel by the officers of the Third Brigade, who were transferring their bivouac from Port Arthur to Liao-tung and the Yalu. A young officer of sharpshooters, native of one of the Baltic provinces, not over twenty-four years of age, possessing a large beard, an immense stature, and wearing a long felt overcoat and a big sword dangling from his shoulders, made amusing comments upon the country. He remarked that the arrival of the railway train was an even greater event in the lives of the Chinese peasants, who stood in little crowds about the stations, than such an event could be to the peasants of Russia. Pointing out the long lines of fortifications about Kin-chou, where troops were maneuvering in the sunshine and where gangs of coolies were even at that time building breastworks out of the frozen earth, he gave an account, as he remembered from the histories of the affair, of the engagements which the Japanese troops had in that vicinity in 1895, when they took the region from the Chinese and captured Port Arthur. Inspired by the thought of war, his youthful imagination carried him into an enthusiastic discussion of the army and the camp. His faith and credulity were immense. Influenced by the rumors of the moment he believed that 100,000 men were about to join the Russian army in Manchuria, one half of whom, in his imagination, were marching overland to Manchuria, the other half coming by train. But, although he had only a confused idea of the movement of the troops, his knowledge regarding the mobilization of troops at Hai-ch'eng and Liao-tung, where, it had been repeatedly reported, there were four to six thousand soldiers, was correct. He said there were not more than three thousand.

The railway was not yet under the control of the military

organization, and the military forces which it was desired to concentrate in the vicinity of the Liao-yang, where the headquarters of the commander-in-chief of the land forces was to be established, were insignificant.

It was in this particular—namely, the possession of a movable army with military stores, that the Eastern Empire was delinquent and unprepared for a campaign. The accusation that the Russian policy in the Eastern Empire was based simply upon “bluff” does not seem to be justified by the facts, and it is certain that by spring Russia would have been amply prepared, according to her own ideas, for a campaign against Japan.

A cavalry, artillery and infantry force was en route from Liao-yang over the Feng-huang-ch'eng road for the Yalu to meet the threatened invasion by the Japanese from Korea.



Incident of the march to the Yalu

## CHAPTER VI

### THE EMPIRE ATTACKED

AT Port Arthur, which was originally intended to be exclusively a fortress, the military management had been greatly modified by the necessities of commerce. When it was found that the trade of the port could not be diverted to Dalny a modification of fortress regulations was made to provide for civil and commercial interests and for a city. The prospects of war were now so far realized that military law began to be supreme. There was, however, a curious indecision on the part of the authorities and confusion regarding the control of local affairs. Especial responsibility rested upon the police department, whose business it was to keep the fortress clear of suspicious persons, but as it is the policy of official power among Russians to rely upon terrorism, this department was characterized by great incompetency, for the city was the rendezvous of Japanese agents as late as February 20th, twelve days after the opening of hostilities.

The presence of correspondents in Port Arthur had by the first of February begun to irritate some of the officials, and especially members of the fleet, where there were many who intelligently dreaded the future. Three war correspondents of foreign nationality had taken up their residence in the fortress city, and Port Arthur was visited almost daily by correspondents from Chefoo. By those who dreaded the future, they were, as a class, regarded as harbingers of war and looked upon as vultures hovering over prospective carrion.

## *The Empire Attacked*

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As the days passed by, one met with curious sensations the quizzical gaze of Russians, who, confused by conflicting rumors and not knowing upon what information to rely, got their fears from the conviction that correspondents were fixtures and could not be scared away. As a precaution, the press was denied the use of the telegraphs. There was no censorate, although it was indicated that press messages having the approval of General Pflug, the Viceroy's Chief of Staff, would be accepted at the telegraphs. He could never be found, and telegrams could be transmitted by ship to the opposite shore of the Gulf of Pechili quicker than through the press machinery of Port Arthur.

The otherwise uncommon fascination of life in Port Arthur for the stranger and correspondent now began to be irksome. The police began to annoy them by frequent arrests and detentions in the police station where so-called revolutionaries and members of the Japanese communities, suspected as spies, and drunken workmen constituted their associates, while they awaited the return of the good-natured Caucasian chief of police from one of his showy parades through the city streets.

The correspondents who had been in the habit of meeting at Saratoff's to drink tea out of glasses and to participate in the discussion of the situation that went on there, broke up, because correspondents were now regarded as spies. "You are a correspondent?" asked of one was spoken as though of something to be avoided. If one answered in the affirmative it was followed invariably by the ominous words, "It will be hard!" and seemed to suggest the gallows.

On the third of February, while walking on the water front, I noticed that I was being followed by a little officer, the upper part of whose face was entirely hidden by his busby, who, after about ten minutes, during which time he seemed to be making up his mind, invited me to go with him.

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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He made no further explanation, but insisted that it would only take a few moments. I consented. He called a carriage and drove me to a stairway which led up into the narrow streets behind the telegraph department on Quail Hill. He led me through the narrow alleyways and passages, through courts into a barrack and at last brought me into the back room of a building occupied by soldiers. He first led me through a room where soldiers were having their mid-day meal, ushered me into a place that looked like a sleeping room, placed a guard on the door and invited me to sit down beside a table where maps and papers were lying and upon which he brought down his fist with several loud thumps. He immediately went out.

I was in the custody of the police, and awaited with considerable curiosity as well as apprehension the outcome of the adventure. Within five minutes the man came back and said that he had expected to have a witness and an interpreter, but that he could not get them, and he invited me to return to the water front, which I did. Here he explained that I tallied with the description of an Englishman whom he had been ordered to arrest for making photographs at the railway station the day before. I saw that he was in considerable doubt, so I explained to him that it was his business to know exactly who I was, because my card was up in my hotel. He apologized and offered me a cigar, which I took. He walked a little farther down the street and held an animated conversation with some one whom I took to be another secret service official, and fearing that he would reconsider his decision, I stepped quickly into his carriage, which was one of the public droshkys, and drove away. It was the first of a series of arrests continuing until all civilians were expelled from Port Arthur.

There was no appreciable decline in the patronage of the *cafés chantant* nor in that of the circus, but in Pushkin

## *The Empire Attacked*

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Street, the main thoroughfare, the performers of the circus, as well as the tenants of the resorts of Port Arthur, could be daily met with, eagerly seeking the latest rumor. Then came a time when the official patronage of the circus began to decline, and it was indeed time to take warning. But Baroufsky's confidence in the Eastern Empire was so complete that he remained to see his fine performing horses confiscated for the cavalry and his acrobats impressed as droshky drivers. His alarmed lady acrobats, inquiring for news, was one of the sights of the Pushkin Skaia on the eve of the attack.

The fleet was anchored in Port Arthur Bay, outside the harbor, where a certain amount of maneuvering was going on. About this time it disappeared for a day, causing a flutter of excitement; it seemed to be leisurely preparing for hostilities, which it held in its own control. It was not unusual to see a squadron outside, but it was to be expected that unusual precautions existed for its safety, such as would be taken in actual war. The contrary was the case. On the eve of the Japanese attack upon this fleet the writer rowed at dusk with a Chinese coolie through the fleet without being seriously challenged. It was a typical clear winter evening of North China. The band on the *Czarevitch* was playing and the seamen were singing their evening hymn. We passed under the bow of one of the smaller cruisers, and near the upper limits of the anchorage counted fourteen cruisers and battle-ships. Returning by dark, one of the cruisers was seen flashing electric signals and three or four searchlights were fixed upon the water. Inside the harbor could be seen the lights of the New Town and the guide lights on Quail Hill, which point out the channel. The city itself was dark, but this was principally because there had never been any system of lighting other than a few oil lamps placed at long distances on the crooked streets. On

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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the bund in front of Saratoff's there had now, within a few days, been accumulated an enormous pile of coal, for the coal docks inside Golden Hill were full. The fleet of small Norwegian commercial steamers, seven in number, that had been almost driven out of business on the China coast by the Japanese and German vessels, had, since the withdrawal of Japanese shipping from Port Arthur, been engaged to hurry coal to Port Arthur.

The war preparations of the Eastern Empire at this time were frantic. The Admiralty was not only piling coal on the bund but in the rocky crevices of Quail Hill near the railway station. At the same time two English tramp steamers had arrived with coal cargoes, and their agents and the agent of the Norwegian vessels were conferring from dawn until late at night with Alexeieff's agent, Mr. Gensberg, with a view to anticipating the declaration of war in time for their ships to reach neutral waters. There were so many rumors of war that when on the night of February 8th the inhabitants, returning late to their homes, heard from their doorsteps shots in the roadstead, they went quietly to bed and slept soundly until morning.

Near midnight on the eighth of February, while writing out dispatches, I heard a succession of shots and stepped out of my door into the upper end of Pushkin Street. The firing continued for several minutes. As the fleet had been nightly carrying out exercises, the city was undisturbed by the incident. Most of the inhabitants of Port Arthur heard the same shots and remained unconscious of their significance until the ninth, for it had not been believed that the first, or for that matter, any attack, would be made at Port Arthur.

At 11:45 P.M., February 8, 1904, the battle-ships *Czarevitch* and *Retzvisan* and the cruiser *Pallada* were successfully torpedoed at their anchorages by a hostile torpedo fleet, and

were soon sinking so rapidly that it was with difficulty their machinery was put in motion and they were run across the harbor entrance and grounded on Tiger's Tail. On the *Czarevitch* were three French engineers who, according to their own confession, had previously resolved to quit the ship whenever it seemed likely that she would go into action. "For," said they, "the officers in charge did not understand her and could not be relied upon in case of battle." These men left the ship immediately she was torpedoed and hurried to a hotel, where they related their adventures to a countryman. They supplied the first intimation to the citizens of Port Arthur of the opening of the war.

By eight o'clock on the morning of the 9th the appearance of three men-of-war ashore at the Tiger's Tail had brought the people to their doorsteps. A few, roused at midnight, had spent all the hours until morning in the streets. At dawn the news spread like wildfire. Any boy on the street could tell the names of the ships. Neaudeau, the French correspondent, was on the bund, his eyes coal-blackened—he had been up all morning and night. He had advised the engineers of the *Retzvian*, who had awakened him as soon as they could get ashore, not to speak much of their desertion of the fleet, as it was not very creditable to them. People fell into little groups, and where we stood talking, an English correspondent stepped up with an air of great importance and declared he had been on an elevation east of Golden Hill during the whole incident of the night!

The wounded from the disabled vessels were being brought ashore and carried into the naval hospital, and a crowd had gathered in front of Saratoff's and was discussing the situation. Among them were some French sympathizers who remarked that this adventure by the Japanese was very clever, even magnificent, but could hardly be said to be in accordance with the modern spirit of warfare, when a lapse

of forty-eight hours was considered an essential between the declaration of war and the commencement of hostilities. This view was assented to by some Russians present, and later in the day was asserted by a captain of one of the warships.

Admiral Alexeieff, when told that three ships had been sunk, was reported as exclaiming, "Impossible!" but now he went to the batteries on Golden Hill and addressed the gunners there. At 10:30 members of his cabinet, and the generals, mounted on horses and in full uniform with their orderlies, paraded the streets, evidently with the intention of inspiring confidence among the populace and creating the impression that the events which were taking place were anticipated with confidence and were being carried on under the direction of the authorities. Among the horsemen were General Krastilinsky, De Plancon, the diplomatic secretary, and Colonel Vershinen, the mayor. Alexeieff and Stoessel were at the sea batteries. It became known that the Japanese fleet had been sighted off Dalny, and the people began to anticipate greater events, but it was still almost incredible that the Japanese would make an attack with their larger vessels upon Port Arthur by day. The three vessels helpless at the harbor entrance were the center of interest and were being visited by small boats and lighters, and an attempt was already being made to close the breaches made in them by the Japanese torpedoes.

At ten minutes past eleven, when I was in a sampan in the middle of the harbor, making my way to the scene, a shell fell into the water just ahead of me, throwing up a great spout of water, and the crack of numerous other shells announced the arrival of the enemy outside. In a few moments, before it was possible to return to the shore, ships in line of battle could be seen through the harbor entrance a few miles out. A few shells dropped into the west harbor, near

## *The Empire Attacked*

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two Russian cargo vessels, one of which, the *Sungari*, had taken refuge there only that morning, having escaped from Dalny. A shell fell inside the Tiger's Tail, near the transport *Kazan*, and another at the torpedo boat station, near the center of the harbor, where there was a great clattering and escape of steam, as though some of the belated torpedo boats were trying to get into action. With the shells spouting water in the harbor and clouds of smoke arising from the forts at the harbor entrance, where the guns had now gotten into action, the spectacle reminded me of the pictures I had seen of naval engagements of the time of the American Civil War.

At the little iron dock under Quail Hill were two young naval officers, whose appearance indicated that they had spent the night in dissipation. They were on their way to join their ships, but were too late. They were reticent and ashamed. We were directly in the line of firing, opposite the entrance of the harbor, and I mounted Quail Hill just behind, so that I might have a better view. The last I saw of these young officers they were standing on the pier gazing out to sea.

It was a brilliant sunny day, and just before the attack Port Arthur was, for the first time since it had been converted into a foreign possession, awed and still. It could be seen that the groups of men and women along the water front had dispersed, and a few vehicles were racing along the bund to escape up Pushkin Street and into the rear of the town. Near the first guide light to the harbor, on Quail Hill, was the house of General Valkauf, above which it was possible to get a view of the entire region spread out in one great panorama. Several shells struck this hill, sending up such showers of small stones and earth that several times I was obliged to take refuge behind a stone wall which enclosed General Valkauf's house. A large shell struck near the

Russo-Chinese Bank, shattering all of the windows in the vicinity. On the left, the portico of a house was blown away, and Manmantoff, a Russian cavalry officer, temporarily acting as a correspondent, was wounded. Fragments from the explosion grazed his temple, cheek and nose. Within fifteen minutes the harbor entrance was hazy with smoke, through which a small steamer, which was afterward found to have been the *Columbia*, was seen making its way outward, disappearing finally behind the west headlands. The guns at the stern of the *Retzvisan* had begun to fire with such energy that clouds of smoke rolled off them and up the bluff, where it joined the smoke of the Wei-yuen forts. An explosion as of a magazine occurred on the Tiger's Tail Peninsula in the west bay. On the left, in front of the Golden Hill forts, occurred an explosion even more vast, indicating clearly that a magazine had blown up near what was known as the "electric cliff." The forts, as well as the *Retzvisan*, seemed to be using black powder, for a heavy cloud of smoke now joined the headlands at the entrance, and it was necessary to go lower down on the side of Quail Hill in order to see beyond the harbor entrance. The line of battle could no longer be seen. About fifteen shells fell in the city and harbor, explosions from which, mingled with the heavy roll of the Russian guns, gave the battle the semblance at intervals of a great cannonade. A terrorized woman fled through the narrow alleys on the face of Quail Hill, seeking her children, and a great crowd swept up Pushkin Street, out in the direction of the race course. At 11:45 the firing ceased, having lasted thirty-five minutes, and when the smoke cleared nothing was to be seen of the enemy, who had slowly withdrawn to sea. All the town on the water front was deserted, while the streets were strewn with merchandise that had fallen off escaping cargo trucks. There was an unexploded shell lying against the base of Quail

## *The Empire Attacked*

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Hill that attracted a crowd of spectators later in the day. The water front was more quiet and deserted than if it had been Sunday. The employees of the commercial offices had fled. At the bank large sums of money disappeared when the clerks decamped. There was one shipping office where the managers vied with each other in rifling the funds. It was hard to conjecture where all these people went, seeing that one place was no more safe than another.

One of the first things done in the early morning was the issuing of an order by the commander of the port, forbidding any foreign vessel to leave the harbor. There were several merchant ships of different nationalities, therefore, imprisoned there; the most important of which were the British coasting ship *Wen-chou* and the British tramp ship *Foxton Hall*, which had brought in a cargo of coal. This vessel was deserted by the captain and crew, and remained several days unclaimed. The little passenger boat *Columbia*, which was anchored outside, had sailed away during the attack unmolested.

The merchant population began to seek means of escape, and there was a continual line of sampans carrying refugees from the bund to the *Wen-chou*, where they swarmed up the gangway and begged the captain to take them away. One merchant ship endeavored to get released and threatened to sail in defiance of the orders given it to remain.

Among the ships of war lying inside the harbor that took no part in the fight was the *Rasboinik*, used as a schoolship, and in command of Prince Leven. The *Rasboinik* was lying between the coal docks and the harbor entrance, where could be observed all that took place in the offing. From this ship could be watched the feverish work of the salvage vessels gathered about the *Pallada*, *Czarevitch* and *Retz-visan*. Wounded men were being taken off these vessels and brought into the naval hospital. Officers of the *Rasboinik*

brought pieces of the Japanese torpedoes aboard, and they had part of a torpedo-firing gear which had been found washed up on the shore. A launch from the *Petropavlovsk* was credited with having first apprehended the Japanese torpedo boats in the night, but was unable to alarm the fleet. Both the *Askold* and *Pallada* claimed to have first opened fire upon the Japanese in the night, and the testimony of the captain of the *Pallada* showed that not only these vessels of the fleet, but the signal station on Golden Hill were aware of the presence of vessels whose signals they did not understand. The Japanese advanced, showing white above red lights, such as were used by the Russian warships when entering the harbor. An officer who saw these lights confessed he was deceived by them and thought that they were Russian torpedo boats returning from Dalny. The Japanese torpedo boats were recognized by their funnels, which were in pairs amidships, and this was the signal to open fire. The *Czarevitch* and *Retzvisan*, which were in the upper line, opened the fire along with the *Pallada*. The Japanese torpedo boats, which seemed to have approached from the southwest, after discharging their torpedoes, withdrew at full speed.

While I was talking with Prince Leven early in the afternoon the battleship *Czarevitch* was got off, and pulled into the harbor by tugs. She was a sad spectacle. She had the most powerful defensive system of any ship in the fleet of the Eastern Empire. As she passed the *Rasboinik*, listing heavily to port, her steel masts and funnels tilted about fifteen degrees, she looked an enormous hulk. The band was playing on board and all hands were on deck and in the fighting-tops. The sailors cheered and were answered by the men on the *Rasboinik*, who had mounted the rigging, and also by the artillerymen in the fortifications on Golden Hill, whose cheers could be heard like a distant echo. The officers of

## *The Empire Attacked*

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the *Rasboinik*, who stood on the bridge with Prince Leven, seemed in a quandary and looked first at the passing warships and then at the men, who in fact did not seem to know why they were cheering. The crew of the *Czarevitch* was so near that it looked as though one might pluck a sailor from the upper structure. It was a wonderful sight. She was towed into a place opposite the bund and anchored. Following her came the *Novik*, under her own steam, with a hole in her starboard water line aft beside the officers' quarters. She, too, had a list and was cheered by the men on the gunwale as she went by, and indeed was the only disabled ship that deserved a cheer, since she had just returned from a gallant attack on the Japanese fleet. One of the Chinese Eastern Railway steamers was assisting the tugs and lighters with the *Retzvisan*, but were unable to get her off, and she lay on the rocks there for more than a month. The *Pallada* was floated much earlier.

Some civilians who had arrived at the entrance to the harbor as the day-battle commenced, had now been brought into the harbor and said that the Japanese fleet had fired the first shot from such a distance that their ships could not be seen, but immediately afterward a warship hove in sight and turned, followed by six other ships in line of battle. They were unable to count a larger number than this before the smoke obscured the view, though at least sixteen large vessels were represented in the Japanese fleet.

It was agreed at the time among the military that the action by the Japanese was a reconnaissance in force. It was regarded as remarkable and admitted to be a great surprise by the Russians and to be worthy the ancient sailor stock of Japan.

The beginning of the unlooked for disasters, which only ended in the destruction of Rodjestvensky's fleet, had commenced. It is an interesting fact that in conversation aboard

one of the large men-of-war some days before these events, one of the officers declared that the officers of the fleet knew well what the result would be when the fleet encountered the enemy. The Russian fleet, when this first trial came, remained for the most part under the guns of the fortifications, which fired over them, while the disabled vessels on Tiger's Tail, with such guns as could be sufficiently elevated, participated in the defense, themselves firing over the main body of the fleet. The dispatch boat *Novik* advanced close enough to the Japanese fleet to fire several torpedoes, and received a shot on her water line which let in the sea and forced her to retire to the shelter of the harbor. The captain of the *Baian* distinguished himself for boldness by leaving the line of battle and taking part in the fight at closer range.

In the afternoon of the 9th the restaurants, except Saratoff's, were open and running. The history of the night of February 8th was discussed everywhere. The appearance of naval officers ashore during the battle, and the knowledge of Madame Stark's reception, which had hardly closed before the Japanese torpedo boat attack, was sufficient in that community, where scandal was perpetual, to inspire the severest criticism. It was not true that many high officers were ashore during the torpedo attack, and Admiral Stark, commander of the fleet, as well as Prince Uktomsky, second in command, were aboard ship by morning, but it was known that the fleet had but one line of patrol boats three miles out, where they should have had three lines, the farthest twenty miles from the fleet. It was believed that no precautions had been taken against attack and that not more than two or three searchlights were in operation.

At the time of the attack by the Japanese torpedo boats it was said that the chief of police was anathematizing his nishvoshtik in front of his house opposite the Viceroy's pal-

ace, and that this was a fair example of the vigilance of the official element. The people toward evening had returned to their houses, some of the more panic-stricken packed a few goods, and as they could not escape by boat went to the railway station, where they crowded into the railway trucks in the hope of being taken away. Many were in a helpless condition, unable to make up their minds what it was best to do. Nearly all the foreign homes employed Chinese domestics, who had fled. When night came the city was without lights, they had been forbidden. In the streets at all hours could be met refugees with their luggage, assisted oftentimes only by a Chinese coolie and a jinrikisha, for it was not possible to have a nishvoshtik at any price, making their way to some point on the railway, either at the city station or at the race track. Wounded men and the sick were heard moaning as they were carried along in the darkness, when it was impossible to find out who they were.

All communication by sea was cut off, but the railway was in regular operation. The trains departed loaded with refugees, and were so beset by all classes that certain trains were set aside for the exclusive use of women and children. At Nanghalen, where the Dalny and Port Arthur branches of the railway unite, there was a crowd for several days, and here could be witnessed the spectacle of the mercantile classes who had waxed fat upon the military, striving with the poor peasant workmen and their families in the most ignoble flight. Some of them would long ago perhaps have quit Port Arthur had they not been misled by the persuasions of the military, who made use of them. It was cold, and the trains were so packed that men were sleeping in the baggage racks.

The military authorities declared a state of war and issued orders prohibiting any south bound passenger traffic. Civilians were expelled from the fortress, and a gradual

exodus to the north of Port Arthur depopulated both that city and Dalny. A declaration of war by Japan was formally made and was soon afterward followed by a similar document by Russia, and the great aim of the conspirators was reached.

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цевъ не хватить ни крови, ни денегъ, чтобы добиться въ чужой землѣ какого-либо успѣха. Первое-же пораженіе вызоветъ страшную реакцію въ населеніи молодого государства, напрягшаго теперь свои послѣднія силы, и благословенія смѣняются проклятіями.

Но для Японіи не потеряна еще возможность вернуться къ благоразумію; отвѣтная русская нота отъ 24-го января открываетъ ей путь взять назадъ свой рискованный шагъ. Будемъ надѣяться, что благоразумные совѣты нейтральныхъ державъ приведутъ возникшее осложненіе къ благополучному концу.

Extract from the *Novi Krai* of January 27th, 1904. With what was fine irony in the face of stern fate this paper printed, on the morning of the battle when the *Czarevitch*, *Retzevan* and *Pallada* were helpless on the rocks, these words: "It is not too late for Japan to take back the fatal step."

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WAR SITUATION

THE administration of the Eastern Empire had been found unprepared for the outbreak of war.

The Government at St. Petersburg was at the time still sending instructions to Port Arthur for demonstrations, which it was vainly expected would continue to influence the Japanese, but which only succeeded in throwing dust in the eyes of its own military at Port Arthur. Within four days the intricate structure of the Viceroyalty was paralyzed, and the civil and industrial forces turned to the use of those whose purpose was to extinguish Japan as the first necessity of the Eastern Empire.

On the morning following the battle the *Nova Krai*, Viceroy Alexeieff's official newspaper, contained an editorial upon the attack which, considering that two Russian battleships and a cruiser were *hors de combat* and in all probability rendered useless for the rest of the war, and one cruiser and a gunboat destroyed at Chemulpo, concluded with what were very remarkable words: "It is not too late for Japan to take back the fatal step." This indicated as much as anything could the ghastly Russian perfidy and as much perhaps as anything else the apprehension and indecision which the Viceroy had developed at the last moment, as well as the aversion of the local military to war, while in it was couched the anxiety of both Port Arthur and St. Petersburg for a part of the naval forces absent from, or en route to Port Arthur.

The fleet of the Eastern Empire was divided. Four cruisers were at Vladivostok; one cruiser and a gunboat were at Chemulpo; while a military transport loaded with valuable ammunition and helpless against attack, was off the China coast. It has been said that the precipitation of war by the Japanese was at this particular time accidental and came about through a press telegram from London containing false information regarding the military plans of Russia. If so, the decision of the Japanese Government came at a fortunate moment. The Russian fleet was scattered.

It has been seen that the Eastern Empire regarded its quarrel with Japan as being in Korea, and Russian operations there fully establish the responsibility of the Eastern Empire in bringing on war and its full appreciation of what it was doing. As far as Korea was concerned, the acts of Russian agents had proved to the Japanese a year before that a peaceful solution there was hopeless. But it was after this that the conspirators of the Eastern Empire secured the Yalu River lumber concession (beginning of 1903) secretly and irregularly, and followed this with obtaining the use of the port of Yongampo, which constituted a foothold upon the soil of Korea, which other powers were denied. The combined influence of America, Great Britain and Japan could not secure the same rights against Russian intrigue, nor could they prevail against Russian influence in an attempt at opening Wiji farther up the river as a compromise. Such evidence of the intentions of the Eastern Empire could not further convince, but further hastened Japan toward war.

In the summer, when the text of the Yangampo Agreement came into the possession of the Japanese and when the Russians had constructed factories and depots at Yangampo—which they had renamed Port Nicholas—Japan began preliminary war preparations in Korea. As in Man-

churia, the Japanese bankers began to close their business. The first of the year 1904, when the Eastern Empire had virtually surrendered negotiations with Japan to the St. Petersburg Government, which divided the negotiations with them, the Japanese were converting the Seoul-Fusan Railway into a line of military communications, building relay stations for the provisioning of troops. These facts were all known in Port Arthur, but were regarded as the experimental operations of an incompetent power. Although a Japanese general, Ijichi, had now arrived as military attaché at Seoul, the fact did not seem to arouse the Russians, because to them all ranks were the same in a nation which they despised. At the same time the Russians were aware that Korea was naturally the road by which the Eastern Empire would be invaded and attacked.

In January the foreign powers, as much because of doubt as to the real situation as of understanding of it, landed troops to protect their legations in the capital. On January 21st the Emperor of Korea issued a proclamation of neutrality which created a sensation. It could not be disguised that this was the work of Russian agents, headed by Pavloff, and it had a peculiarly absurd aspect, because it preceded by more than a fortnight any declaration of war or any act of hostility. It was clearly intended to embarrass the Japanese in their military operations on Korean soil and in Korean ports. The Japanese were the first to land an avowedly hostile force of any dimensions in Korea, but they were by no means the first offenders of Korean neutrality. The operations of the Russians on both sides of the Yalu were imitated by them. The Russian cavalry had operated for a year in northern Korea, when on the 24th of January, 1904, the Japanese landed military supplies at Kinsan, south of Chemulpo, which included a field railway and grain. On the second of February the Naval Office at Port Arthur

stored 1,500 tons of coal, which had been diverted from Port Arthur, on Roze Island, in Chemulpo Harbor, for the use of the small squadron which the Eastern Empire kept there, to awe the Japanese and to defend the port. On the evening of the sixth of February the Japanese minister had left St. Petersburg about forty-eight hours before the Japanese attack on Port Arthur, and his departure was equivalent to a declaration of war. The following morning the Japanese Government handed Baron Rosen, the Russian minister in Tokyo, his credentials. The Japanese military, centered at the Japanese Legation in Seoul, closed the land telegraph lines, but in spite of all these operations the Eastern Empire remained inactive; though in easy communication with their squadron at Chemulpo they did not recall it nor make any attempt to mobilize their navy. On the eighth, when Chemulpo was practically blockaded, the squadron there decided to ask instructions from Port Arthur. There were but two ships, the *Varyag*, a fast cruiser, and the *Koryeetz*, a gunboat. The *Koryeetz* started on this errand and seems unwittingly to have fired the first shot of the war, for when it arrived outside Chemulpo it encountered Japanese torpedo boats. From the Japanese and Russians, who were the only witnesses of what happened, it was found that shots were exchanged and the *Koryeetz* immediately returned to her anchorage in the harbor. A Russian admitted that the *Koryeetz* fired first, though by accident. The Japanese returned the fire, which was without effect. There seems to have been some excitement on the *Koryeetz*, although the officers of that vessel, at any rate, could not have been innocent of what was to be expected as soon as they were on the high seas. The first open act of war was the seizure of the Russian steamer *Mukden*, in the harbor of Fusan, but this was unknown at Chemulpo, where the Russians there were discussing their own situation.

## *The War Situation*

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While they were sitting in council, about four o'clock in the afternoon, three Japanese transports entered the harbor from the south under convoy of a Japanese squadron of cruisers and torpedo boats. The expedition took no apparent notice of the Russian squadron, as though testing the degree of Russian assumption of the neutrality of the port. The stupidity of the Russians was astounding. The *Varyag* and *Koryeetz* remained to watch the Japanese transport embark 2,500 troops throughout the night by the light of great fires burning on the jetty. In all probability the Japanese squadron, consisting of six cruisers with torpedo boats, was watching for the appearance of the *Varyag* and *Koryeetz* outside the harbor. But the Russians suspended any action until the next day. About ten o'clock on the morning of the 9th Admiral Uriu, of the Japanese squadron, caused a letter to be handed to Captain Rudnieff of the *Varyag*, informing him that unless both the Russian boats left the harbor the Japanese would come in at four o'clock and attack them. Captain Rudnieff shared the intelligence with the Russian Consul and with the commanders of four foreign war vessels in the port. These were an Italian, an American, a French and a British, whose commanders held a conference in which they agreed that the port was neutral and that the Japanese admiral was exceeding his rights. The commander of the British vessel was deputed to confer with the Japanese admiral, and the Russian commander was advised to remain where he was anchored. The neutral vessels decided also to remain where they were. Captain Rudnieff, however, accepted Admiral Uriu's challenge, because he believed that the honor of the Russian flag demanded it. The engagement lasted a little over three-quarters of an hour, when the *Varyag*, which had borne the brunt of the fight, was injured below the water line and disabled, and being slowly sinking went to the mouth of

the harbor and dropped anchor. Though the *Koryeetz* was still intact, she followed the *Varyag* and took up her anchorage near by where the two ships decided to fight to the last and then blow themselves up. The foreign commanders in the port, however, decided that the Russians had done all that honor required of them and offered them asylum aboard their own ships. The Russian commanders accepted, and with their crews and wounded went aboard the British cruiser *Talbot* and the French cruiser *Pascal*. About half-past three the *Koryeetz* was blown up and sunk, and the *Varyag*, which had been slowly filling, went down at evening with the bodies of forty-one dead in the cabin. The engagement began after the day attack on Port Arthur had closed.

The Russians displayed splendid heroism. The commanders of the *Varyag* and the *Koryeetz* set an example at Chemulpo when they cleared their decks for action and went to their supposed doom, which a couple of months later the army under Sassulitch thought itself obliged to emulate. Although the Russian judgment was bad and was the means of their losing these two ships, there is no reproach upon the courage of the fighters. Had the Russian authorities at Chemulpo and Seoul been discreet the *Varyag* at least could have escaped to Port Arthur as late as the morning of the 8th, and the *Koryeetz* itself might have eluded pursuit. But at least they established with the Japanese military men the high opinion of Russian courage which the Japanese retained throughout the war. From the day of this event to the day of Rodjestvensky's defeat the men of Russia who had set this example of bravery, gave eminent demonstration of their ability to die. The Russians never insisted that the Japanese were necessarily wrong in the violation of the purely technical neutrality of the port of Chemulpo, which they knew to be a figment of their own.

## *The War Situation*

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The Japanese soon after captured the transport *Manchuria* and a large cargo of ammunition.

Port Arthur was well supplied with coal, an advantage, the credit of which is due to the merchant Gensberg. The troop transport *Kazan* also landed 1,800 men from the Black Sea. Considering that on land the military authorities were preparing to repel invasion, the management of the fleet was inexplicable upon any other ground than that of gross incompetency. And when it is considered that the object of precipitating the war on the part of Russia was to establish the Eastern Empire on the sea, and that when the domain of the sea was lost permanently at Tsushima the war ended, the military and diplomatic conduct of the authorities was unpardonable. It was, however, never visited with the retribution which came to men like Stoessel and some of Rodjestvensky's commanders.

The remarks of Russia's enemies when the Eastern Empire, through its navy, had made this awkward bow to the world, were bitterly prophetic. It was remembered on the China coast that the Japanese had boldly exposed the bugaboo of Chinese military power some years before, and Japan was now credited with having "pricked another bubble."

At least five of the fighting ships of the fleet were *hors de combat*. The *Varyag* and *Korycetz* were lost at Chemulpo, several valuable merchant vessels of the sea-going service of the Eastern Empire railways were taken. The battle-ship *Oslyabia* and the fleet of cruisers, torpedo boats and transports en route to reinforce the Viceroy's navy, were turned back. A week after the opening of the war it was confidently asserted that neither the navy of the Eastern Empire nor that of Russia in Europe would be a serious factor in the war.

Confusion reigned in the whole military organization of

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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Port Arthur following the Japanese attacks of the 8th and 9th. The Viceroy was absent and the War Department hopelessly at sea. The British captains of merchant ships were compelled to appeal to their Government for help. The steamer *Wen-chou*, loaded with refugees—principally Chinese, who had crowded the open decks—received permission to leave, but when she reached the guardship was fired upon and a Chinese killed on the forward deck. This blunder was chargeable to the harbor guardship. The *Wen-chou* at last got away. Another British ship that had brought in a cargo of coal was taken out some time after by a crew imported for that purpose. These acts show the incompetency and indecision of the navy.

The country in the rear of Port Arthur and Dalny was in a pitiful condition. On the morning of the 10th, Nang-halen, the junction of the Port Arthur and Dalny branches of the railway, was crowded principally with women and children who had spent hours of waiting before the long trains could be made up which were to carry this excited and wretched crowd northward. One was fortunate to secure a place even on the platform of a third-class carriage, where immediately it became so cold that it was necessary to go inside—if an entrance was possible—and then it was difficult to find a place even on the baggage rack under the roof, reserved for the peasants' baggage. The trains crept north almost at a snail's pace and were so crowded that many of the passengers came from time to time to stand on the platforms, where they could get the air. Several of the former merchants of Port Arthur, and the late manager of the Russo-Chinese Bank, got away on this day. When night came on the stench in the carriages was terrible and it was necessary every few minutes to climb down from the baggage rack and go out on the platform. It required all day and night of the 10th to get to Niu-ch'uang, by way of which

## *The War Situation*

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port a few refugees from Port Arthur and Dalny left Manchuria. At the same time refugees were coming down from Vladivostok and Harbin to escape into China. At Niuch'uang, by the 11th, a report had been received that half of a force of 12,000 Japanese had been destroyed near Ta-lien Bay, where, it was reported, they had attempted to land and capture the Kin-chou position. This story was sent to St. Petersburg in an official report and was not officially discredited until a week after.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE NEUTRAL BORDER

**T**HE region adjoining the Liao River became the western limits of the theater of war, Niu-ch'uang the westernmost barrier of Russian defenses—the last fortified position on the Liao-tung Gulf coast. The frontier of the Eastern Empire at Niu-ch'uang was important on account of the foreign consuls established there (for it was the only treaty-port in Manchuria) and its intimate connection with the Chih-li province.

Niu-ch'uang is a long, straggling Chinese town on the east bank of the Liao, eighteen miles from the river bar that lets the ships in from the sea at high tide—all the plain in which it lies is a low mud flat. At the upper end of the town is the foreign settlement ranged about the Imperial Chinese customs.

The place is not attractive in summer and is very desolate in winter. Like the Neva at St. Petersburg, the Liao is closed with ice the latter part of November. It was when Russia had carried out the first part of Lessar's Convention and evacuated the country between the Great Wall and the Liao, that the conspirators of the Eastern Empire fixed their provisional frontier here. In the latter part of the summer Russian military had inspected the old dilapidated forts at the mouth of the river and drawn up a plan of defenses which they soon devised and manned with soldiers.

A traveler arriving at this place in the dead of winter and speaking neither Chinese nor Russian might pity his own condition. He would be turned out of a warm railway

carriage at night into the pitiless wind. Even if he were a seasoned traveler, the most indifferent to comfort, he could not face that bare, chartless, frozen Manchurian delta and Mongolian wind without a shudder. Coming from the west one landed at the river bank where, at this season, it was necessary to take a p'ai-tzu—a small sled propelled with a stick which the Chinese operator, standing with one foot on each of the runners, strikes against the ice. More likely there would be no p'ai-tzu to be had, for the Chinese seldom go out at night, in which case the traveler must find for himself a bed where he may in the little village there, or make his way alone nearly two miles over the ice and up the river to the desolate hotels, only one degree better than those of Port Arthur.

Since 1900 Niu-ch'uang had been, under protests from foreign powers, under the rule of a Russian civil administrator, who governed the city and the people, except the foreign nationalities outside of the Chinese, as though they were Russians. The Imperial Chinese Customs was in their hands and they possessed all the customs receipts since 1900. This administrator, under direct authority of Alexeieff, exercised something of a despotic supervision not only of city affairs, but of foreign affairs affecting nations, and it was with considerable difficulty that the representatives of foreign powers were able to deal with him in matters affecting their sacred treaty rights.

The Eastern Empire in fact successfully usurped, for four years, the rights of nations there. It had set great store by the administration of this port. It had erected a fine residence for its administrator, and over a dome on this building was placed the Russian eagle in gilt, overlooking the city and the region, emblematic of Russian authority. A large bank building was under construction and there was a parade ground with barracks and a Russian school for

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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Chinese. There was a large police establishment, which was the main instrument for the execution of the administrator's laws and regulations. Among the most interesting of these was a proclamation to suppress a strike of the Chinese workmen in the oil factories, who were demanding an increase in their wages. It reads as follows:

"I have found out that wages have been increased in the last three years once every year. What caused this stoppage of work? By the law of Russia, labor leaders who stop work or trade should receive the same punishment as rebels, and followers should also be punished strictly. I have therefore arrested and punished the leaders, and post this notice to inform you that all should begin work as usual not later than to-morrow. Any one disobeying this will be immediately arrested and expelled from this port."

Following this a notice was posted, namely:

"Notice is hereby given to all the people and merchants of Niu-ch'uang. Since this port is administered by the power of Russia, all cases must be reported before me for judgment. Some merchants did not report the cases to me, but asked other foreigners—merchants, missionaries of other nations. It should be understood that merchants care only for commercial interests; foreigners have their own business, and missionaries are especially for preaching. They cannot meddle with other business, especially under the administration of Russia. I therefore inform you that hereafter you should come to me with all cases, whether petitions to the judge or the police station, and you are not allowed to confer with foreigners, merchants or missionaries. Severe punishment will be given those who disobey me.

"A. OSTROVERKHOFF,

"Russian Civil Administrator.

"Niu-ch'uang."

In regard to the causes that aggravated the hostility of various other powers interested in Manchuria, Niu-ch'uang played a more important part than any other city.

The Powers, as well as the Government of China, had a grievance here with Russia which only war could settle. In accordance with custom, one British and one American gun-boat wintered here. There was also in 1903-4 the Russian gunboat *Sivootch*. These vessels were interned in mud docks at the upper end of the town within a short distance of each other, where they exchanged official formalities, but the captain of the *Sivootch* complained that he had a weak heart and failing health and was afraid of the American captain's whisky. It was at the time when the American Government was pressing strongly for the opening of Manchuria to trade, and especially the cities of Antung and Mukden. It was a matter of great international importance and completely inimical to the Eastern Empire, and the Russians felt a bitter hostility to America. America's attitude, which had signally strengthened under Mr. Hay, had greatly offended the Russians, whose duplicity he had uncovered. Members of Alexeieff's cabinet had roughly asserted that America had lost millions of rubles in trade by having "tied herself to the wheels of England," who was so shamelessly pressing Japan's cause. They threatened to completely extinguish American interests in Manchuria. One of the generals said that Russia was fully determined to hold Manchuria, even though Japan, England, America and all the nations opposed her. "There is the logic of history, the logic of events, and the logic of theory," said he, "and in this case events have decided the fate of Manchuria and they are immutable."

Niu-ch'uang was now the only port in the Russian Eastern Empire, of which the Russians had control, where free communication could be had with the outside world, and which was accessible to travelers and to correspondents. Within a few days correspondents who had lived in Port Arthur or visited it from time to time, congregated at Niu-ch'uang,

which was then held to be neutral ground. It was not long, however, until the authorities of the Eastern Empire found occasion to annul this neutrality on this and other accounts and they also took possession of the telegraphs on the west bank of the river, opposite the city. The official mail of the foreign consuls was opened and sometimes delayed, when there was an object for doing so, for several days. Foreign interests centered there began to clamor for relief, because they foresaw the slow extinction of trade unless Niu-ch'uang remained an open Chinese port. But through influences which are not clearly understood, but doubtless on account of the city commanding the principal waterway of southern Manchuria, and the fact that Russia had maintained possession of and a bitter contention for it, and for the further reason that Japan looked forward to using the Liao as a line of communication in a later stage of the war, the Powers included it in the theater of war and made such an arrangement with Russia as would only guarantee the rights of individuals and foreign property therein.

Having formed a plan of border defense connecting the Yalu defenses with the defenses of the Ussuri province on the east, the Eastern Empire proceeded to abolish the neutrality of the port of Niu-ch'uang on the southwest frontier, and to thus get rid of the knotty questions which had aggravated its foreign relations for four years. To this end the Viceroy issued an order on March 13th declaring the city and port of Niu-ch'uang in a state of war, and the following regulations were at once put into effect:

1. The entire territory, city and port, also all persons, without distinction of jurisdiction and neutrality, resident therein, are subjected to special regulations regarding a state of war.

2. Travelers arriving by sea, as well as cargoes entering the port, must be inspected by naval as well as customs officers.

3. The importation of arms and ammunition is forbidden.
4. The exportation of contraband of war to Japan and Korea is forbidden.
5. Persons desiring to export contraband of war are required to deposit a sum equivalent to the value of the cargo with the Russo-Chinese Bank, to serve as a guarantee that the cargo will not be forwarded after leaving Niu-ch'uang from neutral ports to Japan or Korea.
6. Functions of the lightship and harbor guides on the Liao are suspended.
7. Contraband is to consist as per the Emperor's ruling of the fourteenth of February.
8. The military and civil authorities of Niu-ch'uang will be guided by the Institute on Government, Article 23.

The importance of Niu-ch'uang lay in the fact that it was the only part of the Eastern Empire that was in juxtaposition with the outside civilized world.

As the exports from Niu-ch'uang were all in the list of contraband, and as it was impracticable and absurd to deposit the value of cargoes in a Russian bank, these orders threatened to extinguish business in Niu-ch'uang, and required much negotiation between the civil administrator, Alexeieff, and the foreign merchants before they could be reduced to working order. The treaty rights secured to foreign interests, which the Viceroy had asserted would not be molested, had in these particulars been annulled by him. Ex-territorial, as well as the consular jurisdiction, had been invaded and the position of the foreign consuls appeared to be untenable.

It appears that it was owing principally to the wishes of Japan that America and England deferred, in the matter of previous contentions regarding their interests, to the plans of the Russians. For some days and weeks there was some vacillation on the part of the Americans and British, but at last, when the river opened, the American gunboat

*Helena* and the British gunboat *Espiegle* departed. The British consul strongly urged British women and children in Manchuria to leave Niu-ch'uang before the river opened. The German authorities warned their own race that they remained in Niu-ch'uang and Manchuria at their own risk. It was given out that Russia favored the neutrality of Niu-ch'uang and that the action of the authorities of the Eastern Empire was brought on by the opposition of Japan.

The reception of war by the *Nova Krai* reflected the sentiments of a large part of the officialdom of the Eastern Empire, and seemed to produce one of those anomalous situations possible perhaps only in such countries as Russia. The civilian element made bitter comments upon the action of the Russian Government. A certain civil judge declared that Russian diplomacy had shown itself to be utterly imbecile in dealing with Japan. It was learned that the Czar was at the theater when the outbreak at Port Arthur occurred, and that his ministers had always kept the actual state of things secret from him.

A curious belief existed among the Russians at this time. They declared that men were being paid by outsiders to foment the war feeling in Japan, and they wholly discredited Japanese initiative. The meaning which the declarations of war by Japan and Russia carried to Manchuria and to the Eastern Empire was partly conveyed in a proclamation by Admiral Alexeieff—posted about the twenty-fifth of February—which contains his expectation of the co-operation of the native government and people. It begins: “Let the Military, Merchants, Gentry and People of the Three Provinces of Manchuria tremble and obey.” The second article is a good example of the remarkable logic with which the Eastern Empire throughout its adventures browbeat the Chinese. In one sentence it claims Chinese interests to be those of the

## *The Neutral Border*

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Eastern Empire and that the Chinese as neutrals should assist the Russian army.\*

In contained an earnest appeal for the sympathies of the people in the present crisis, when "we must put our back to the wall."

The land forces were now preparing to close up the gap between the Yalu and the Ussuri province of the Eastern Empire; for, unable to resist the landing of Japanese troops in Korea, or by naval force to command the coast there, as they had attempted by diplomatic agreement to do, they prepared to meet the Japanese land forces at some point on the Seoul-Wi-ju road.

The old Chinese fort between Niu-ch'uang and the sea was at once occupied by a field battery and one company of infantry. Shortly afterward several siege guns were mounted there. Americans and Britons regarded their interests as abandoned by their governments, and when their gunboats left the river they protested through their consuls and ministers at Peking. They were indignant and regarded the withdrawal of their governments as inviting depredations upon their interests.

The Japanese consul had long ago retired, leaving Japanese affairs in the hands of the American consul. This example the Russians imitated by transferring to the French consular agent the custody of extensive bank, consular and civil administration property. The control of the telegraphs opposite Niu-ch'uang, in neutral territory, and the concession of the control of the city of Niu-ch'uang entirely to the Russians, seemed to expose the terminus of the Chinese-British Railway, a fact which aroused the apprehension of the British managers, who feared that in the event of the Russians retreating, the terminus would be destroyed.

In this way the Russianizing of Niu-ch'uang, that three

\* See Appendix.

years had not entirely achieved, was done, so to speak, in a day, and the Eastern Empire, except for the peninsula of Korea, already invaded and occupied by the Japanese, was closed to the world. In the presence of the foreigners resident in Niu-ch'uang, and the consuls, practically interned there, the Russians seemed to feel that the Powers had conspired to embarrass them, when almost unexpectedly they found that their plans had worked out.

General Linievitch, who was the senior officer in the Eastern Empire and the most distinguished, was selected to command the land forces, and had arrived from Harbarvosk at Liao-yang, where the army was being mobilized. In the middle of March he visited Niu-ch'uang to inspect the defenses, which were already under care of General Kondratovitch, and K'ai-chou on the gulf, which was the center of defenses to be constructed for the protection of the southwest. An additional battery of artillery, and 150 Cossacks were added to the defenses of Niu-ch'uang, the life of which was now beginning to resemble that of Port Arthur. As it filled up with under-officers and generals it became more and more gay. Whatever the effects of the early misfortunes of the Empire were upon the Viceroy and his staff, it had little effect upon the temper of the authorities at large. It was noticeable throughout the war that the imperial system, as it existed among the Russians, gave them a false sense of security. When one disaster was reported upon another, there was outwardly no great concern. The Russians gave the impression that no consequences were involved, because it was impossible for any great or serious disaster to overtake the Empire. Now that it was involved in calamity the people fell back upon the state for deliverance in perfect confidence.

Instead of a general awakening after the first attacks at Port Arthur, there was an amazing indifference. The clubs

and hotels filled up with officers when part of the women who had been expelled from Port Arthur with all civilians established themselves there. The dissipations that had made Port Arthur notorious throughout the East, were imitated in this border port. Most of the foreigners had removed their families, who had taken refuge at Shan-hai-kuan and Tien-tsin, or in the Chinese capital.

The fame of society, as it was understood in the Eastern Empire, was alone sufficient to compel respectable families to leave. The exhibition of immorality charged against the naval military in Port Arthur, could not have been more flagrant than that carried on by the officers of the land forces, who were to be seen in this resort. In the public dining room of a crowded hotel a general of cavalry on one occasion introduced his entire subordinate staff to a public woman at dinner. The foreign guests of the hotel were amazed at the spectacle, and some French journalists, who, as allies of the Russians, were in the enjoyment of special privileges from officials, were so disgusted that they denounced the proceeding before leaving the dining room. It was said at the time that a bottle of champagne and a woman were sufficient inducement to tempt an officer from his post. At this very time citizen patriots were with bitterness openly reproaching servants of the state because they had to be dragged from their debaucheries to save the remnants of the Port Arthur fleet. It does not seem possible to one acquainted with the navy that there has been any great exaggeration in these charges. It is a matter of common knowledge that when exposed to, and threatened by, the enemy, and even during engagements, as well as in the last flight of the army after Mukden, duty was abandoned for cards, drinking and women.

The foreign merchants whose observations upon the Russian military were keen because associated with expectations

of gain, and who had laid in extensive cargoes of military supplies, complained that, instead of field glasses, pans, camp kettles and stores, the Russian officers made daily requisitions upon them for fans, bon-bons, perfumeries, garters and toilet requisites, and did not always want to pay the bill!

The Japanese consul from Che-foo had not been able to carry all of the Japanese refugees over from Port Arthur before the attack, a fact which probably contributed to the confidence of the authorities there. Some who were left behind, as well as the refugees of all nationalities in the interior, particularly Harbin, began to arrive in Niu-ch'uang by the middle of February. The Japanese refugees, among whom were a large number of women, were regarded with suspicion, and several Japanese merchants were sent on from the interior to Port Arthur, where they remained, with five Japanese women, though well treated, in the military prison under Golden Hill for thirteen days, from February 7th to 20th, or until released through the activity of the American consul, Henry B. Miller. Nearly three hundred refugees, mostly women, arrived at Ta-shih-ch'iao from Harbin and were delivered into the charge of the American consul.

American and English refugees from Russian cities in the north arrived and reported that German and French nationals would be permitted to remain in the theater of war. On account of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement, British subjects had been required to sign an agreement to leave the theater of war within a given time. In Niu-ch'uang itself was a Japanese innkeeper, a Japanese barber and a well-digger, who had been resident there for several years and were under the avowed protection of the Russian civil administrator, who had agreed with the American consul that no action would be taken against them without due notification. But little more than a week after the attack upon Port

Arthur the premises where they were quietly celebrating their year's-end holidays, were invaded by the police. The American consul was notified by the British residents, who told him that in passing a Japanese inn they had heard a Japanese woman cry out in English, "Oh, don't take me away, don't take me away!" The place was about five minutes' walk distant. When he arrived there he found the entrance to the court in which the hotel building was situated open but guarded by a Russian soldier. The consul pushed past the guard who tried to stop him and entered the hotel building. The place was full of Russian soldiers, twelve or fifteen of them. They had broken open the doors, rifled the sleeping rooms of three Japanese women; bound three Japanese men, tying their arms tightly behind them; stabbed one of them, and also had in captivity a blind Chinese musician, and were at the moment plundering the trunks, chests and bureaus. Most of the furniture was already broken up, and all the provisions which these innocent people had brought together had been looted. While the consul, who was the proper representative of the Japanese in Manchuria, was making an examination of this spectacle, a Caucasian police sergeant appeared, who was the captain of this gang, acting under the Police Department. He desired to explain that the consul was an American, and not the Japanese consul, but when he was told that Mr. Miller was the Japanese consul as well, he was greatly astonished. At the same time he was not disposed to give up his spoil and refused to release the prisoners until the chief of the Police Department was sent for, when he was dismissed, and the affair placed in the hands of the civil administrator, who promptly paid the damages and endeavored to hush the matter up. In this manner, at least in Niu-ch'uang by the Police Department, was resented the attitude of the Japanese nation. The incident had such a disgraceful look, that the Caucasian sergeant was

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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dismissed and the civil administrator applied to the American consul to have the matter suppressed and kept out of his official reports. The consul had no right to do this and had no choice but to place an account of the outrage on record with the American and Japanese governments.

It happened that the Caucasian sergeant had the day before been selected by the civil administrator to accompany the writer to Port Arthur, permission having been granted through the efforts of the consul, and of Mr. Grosse, the civil administrator, to revisit the fortress on particular business. The Caucasian had reported at the consulate, where we were to meet for the purpose of proceeding to the railway station. He was armed with the proper authorization which it was necessary for us to have before we would be accepted on the railway. I had been unable to get any conveyance to take us to the railway station, which was two miles distant, and my escort, dressed in a long, glittering black coat, with a poniard and sword and those showy imitation cartridges which altogether form the national costume of these people, was an entirely too magnificent individual to walk to the station. When I proposed walking to him I felt as though I had done him an irreparable injury, and immediately proffered the suggestion to this cut-throat that we wait until the following day. As I had been present at the dénouement of his little adventure at the Japanese inn I was not sorry that our acquaintance had begun in such a manner. He was a most evil-looking Russian and I had the conviction that he had taken advantage of the opportunity afforded him to plunder, if not to murder these innocent people, and that he was the last custodian in the world that any human or animal thing would wish to have.

If civil affairs were at times conducted with barbarism in Niu-ch'uang those of the military and police were practiced in savagery, and as the existing war was regarded as a com-

parison of civilizations in which it was widely believed Christian would prove superior to pagan, it is important to make a permanent record of the fact of these initial brutalities on the part of Russians.

The military frontier properly began at the Russian railway station on the east bank of the Liao, a little distance above Niu-ch'uang. This frontier inspired in the stranger a sense of dread which accompanies the mere mention of "Russian frontier." The heavy sense of decorum and responsibility which seems to oppress the Russian functionaries, and the uniform and insignia which they wear, is extremely depressing. Mankind in them was reduced to machinery, and in this case seemingly invested with the mysterious and eccentric power of official injury, which even they do not appear to understand, but, like the stranger, dread. A stranger, however, bearing the proper authorization, required nothing more than an official inspection of the same to command the services of all minor functionaries, which in the Eastern Empire were at the time very agreeable. The Eastern Empire was a land of new hope to them in which they had dreamed, if they did not manifest the freedom of the West.

The Niu-ch'uang branch line is but twelve miles long and joins the main line of the Central Manchurian Railway at Ta-shih-ch'iao, where the trains connect with the Siberian Express. The station at Niu-ch'uang at this time was crowded with civilians en route to Ta-shih-ch'iao to meet friends and relatives from the south. While restlessly waiting for the trains to be made up, Russian officers remarked, "We can *drink* nothing—there is nothing to drink!" as a means of relieving the monotony of suspense. At Ta-shih-ch'iao, where they waited hours for the Port Arthur Express, there was much excitement on account of reports that the *Askold* and other ships had been destroyed by the Japanese.

At the same time there was a report that the Russian forces at Kin-chou had destroyed half a brigade of Japanese who had landed at Ta-lien. Foreigners were looked upon with suspicion and much curiosity and inspected by officers of the railway guard and the *gendarmerie*. So strict were the military orders from Port Arthur that all papers had to be again examined, but once aboard the Siberian Express the track was clear from Ta-shih-ch'iao to Port Arthur.

Compared with other railways of the Far East, this great express was something really imposing, and the manager of this train was a dignitary—he might almost have been the Viceroy of the Eastern Empire—for his accomplishments, his grandeur and condescension. He spoke several languages and was acquainted with everything concerning the Eastern Empire, including politics. The Russian porter was a real and present blessing, not the lofty sovereign autocrat in dusky isolation, that characterizes American portership—but a servant and a benefactor. Throughout March and April the railway to Port Arthur was operating on schedule. The peninsula of Liao-tung was quiet. Two to twenty-five Frontier Guardsmen were stationed at each culvert and bridge to protect the line. The fortress troops from Port Arthur maneuvered on the Kin-chou isthmus and by the devising and strengthening of their defenses there, were preparing for the battle that was to take place in May.

## CHAPTER IX

### LOSS OF THE SEA

A WEEK after the first attack upon Port Arthur, under the gray of the winter sky, especially the cold mist of dawn, Port Arthur was quiet and grand. The *Retzvisan* was still on the rocks at the harbor mouth where the lighters could be seen working at her and where, for a remuneration commensurate with the task, though not adequate for the risk, a Scotch engineer was engaged to float her. He complained that the Russian officers had assigned him a berth on that side of the vessel exposed to the enemy and had reserved those away from the enemy for themselves. The *Novik* was in the naval dock undergoing repairs, while the *Czarevitch* and the *Pallada* remained resting in the harbor unchanged. Captain Essen, of the *Novik*, and Captain Versain of the *Baian*, had been commended for their gallantry in the action of February 9th.

The military authorities had taken possession of all abandoned warehouses and stores, and regulations were in force fixing prices so that there could be no competition. It was believed that the fortress possessed sufficient food supplies to maintain the garrison for two years. The British tramp ship *Foxton Hall*, which had brought in a cargo of coal, and was now floating loosely at her cables alongside the coal dock, as well as one other British ship which had been abandoned, were waiting for their captains and crews, whom the authorities were trying to induce to return to Port Arthur

and take them away. The Norwegian ship *Brand*, which had brought in a cargo of lumber and hay before the attack, was preparing to leave with refugees and dispatches. A considerable number of Japanese refugees were included in the cargoes of these vessels through the personal interest of the Viceroy and his minister, De Plancon, who were anxious to get them away. About thirty per cent. of the civil population remained in Port Arthur. Trains were still crowded with refugees both from Port Arthur and Dalny. Having cleared the unfortunate vessels which had been caught in Port Arthur harbor during the first attack, the Viceroy issued a proclamation to the world which, by abolishing all restrictions and obstacles to navigation in the harbors of Liao-tung, sought to encourage blockade running, with a view to supplying the garrison with fresh food.

General Valkauf was still the civil governor. The *Nova Krai* was virtually suspended, though it was issuing occasional bulletins. At night the city was in darkness, except for the Viceroy's house, which, as it was in a conspicuous place, visible from all the fortifications in a radius of several miles, was brilliantly lighted up every night to give confidence to the garrison, although Alexeieff himself, with members of his staff, was at the time absent at Liao-yang, and was reported to have gone on to Mukden and Harbin. General Stoessel was still commander of the fortress, though it was reported that he would be replaced by a General Zerlinsky, a wish that was father to the thought perhaps, but which was not realized. The Japanese fleet was sighted at intervals from Golden Hill. The mine transport, *Yenessei*, while laying mines outside the bay at Dalny, accidentally blew herself up and left many stray mines upon the waters, which drifted seaward and began that formidable menace to navigation which continued for two years in the Gulf of Chili and the Yellow Sea. The heroic death of the commander,

Stepanoff, in the attempt to save a part of the ship's crew, was the topic of the hour. The Russian cruiser *Boyarin*, which undertook to relay the drifting mines at Dalny, was torpedoed by the Japanese torpedo boats *Asagiri* and *Hayatori* in a snowstorm on the morning of the 14th, making the second cruiser of the fleet of the Eastern Empire totally destroyed. She did not, however, disappear in the sea, but was run on the rocks. A general attack had been planned upon Port Arthur, but owing to a severe gale, the darkness and a heavy snowstorm, only the two torpedo boats above mentioned were able to get into action. Two other Japanese torpedo boats, it was reported afterwards, narrowly escaped running ashore.

It seemed very strange, considering that Port Arthur was in a state of siege, that there were yet foreigners lingering about without any apparent occupation, one of whom, having been at last arrested as a suspicious person and carried to the police station, was released because he was able to state that he was a resident at the "Americansky Dom," which endeared him to the chief of police. The "Americansky Dom" was a brothel, the mistress of which, the chief of police explained, was a great friend of his.

The only apparent alteration in the administration of the police department consisted in the examination of all arrivals within the fortress. This generally required two hours, most of which time was spent in waiting for the appearance of the chief of police. If one's papers were correct a police sergeant would be detailed as an escort, release from whom could be bought for a few rubles.

There were yet a number of tradesmen literally cowering in their houses, which in some places were little more than burrows in the hills. Under the walls of the old Chinese fort, between the city and the native town, were houses that were for the time deserted, and about them some neighbors

gathered and jabbered like animals who have suddenly come upon the dead body of a fellow.

At Effiemoff's, where the accumulated grime of the past three years was eloquent of guests who were departed forever, it was no trouble to get a room now. Saratoff's also was shorn of its cheap grandeur. The veranda was dark and empty and all the windows were screened to shut in the light. The guests who at evening congregated here crowded into the little room which contained the bar. When I landed in Port Arthur I was immediately placed in charge of a police sergeant who, for a few rubles, had temporarily released me, and here at seven o'clock, while the sergeant was absent, I was rearrested by my former police enemy and carried off to the police station at the top of the hill back of the Old Town. I should not have mentioned this incident had it not served as well as anything to show the pettiness, incompetence and general worthlessness of the Port Arthur police. As a matter of fact, I had reported at the police station for orders just previous to going to Saratoff's for dinner. I was on parole and had not been absent from my sergeant long when I was pounced upon and ignominiously hustled off in the midst of my dinner. We had no sooner arrived in the police station than my sergeant escort, who was hot on our trail, arrived. Coming up to me he exclaimed: "Well, you are here, are you?" and threw down his cap, striding up and down the room looking for his enemy and muttering curses through his teeth. He looked into the chief's room and must have seen therein the little police officer who had arrested me, for he came back and awaited his appearance. It was but a moment until the man came out. He was a small fellow, conceited and vain, though it was said of him that he was notoriously the only honest man in the police department. The sergeant, a big fellow, regarded his antagonist as though he would grind him into

the very dirt and filth in which we stood. The little one made a foolish attempt to turn his achievement into a joke. This only enraged the sergeant, who grasped the little one's round, blond bullet-head in his great hands and rubbed his ears and face so viciously that it seemed there would not be a feature left. The sergeant set him spinning on his pegs as he released him and all that could be seen of his head as he dashed out of the room was the blood-red glow with which it was flushed. The chief of police, who was at heart a really fine fellow, was so disgusted that he apologized profusely and ordered that I be released.

It was such incidents as these that made comedy of Russian authority in Port Arthur. The most casual observer was continually meeting with the incompetence and corruption existing among officials, and especially the meannesses and futilities of the police. While the Japanese were making maps of the inner harbor and the position of the fleet outside the harbor, the police were arresting inoffensive journalists and depriving them of their meals. While the enemy's torpedoes were exploding under the Russian ships in front of the harbor, naval officers were dandling *chansonnettes* in the *cafés chantant!* While the Japanese seamen were cheering as they retired from their attack the Russian officers were applauding the ballet at Baroufsky's circus, and innocent Russian seamen singing songs of home, let drop the accordion to hear with amazement the rush of the sea into the ship.

It was now much more difficult to get into Port Arthur, not on account of the police, who worried the merchants and all non-official persons, but on account of the military. Merchants who had had access to the fortress for the purpose of closing up their affairs, and those merchants who were still catering to the fortress and army, were forbidden to go back and forth. But there were numerous refugees from

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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time to time and many workmen who deserted it and furnished a graphic narrative of what transpired there. On February 25th the disabled *Retzvisan*, which still lay like a tide-water fort at the harbor entrance, stopped with her guns several Japanese merchant hulks which were boldly sent forward in the night under their own steam for the purpose of blocking the harbor entrance. They succeeded in getting in under the guns of the forts. One went ashore in front of the *Retzvisan*, one was sunk on the opposite side under Golden Hill promontory, and one to the west, under the Wei-yuen forts.

The Japanese hulks were accompanied by torpedo boats, which took off their crews who escaped. In the morning of the 26th the Japanese fleet reconnoitered Port Arthur Bay in force. Three ships appeared southeast about ten miles off, and shortly afterward twelve other ships steamed toward the harbor entrance from the southwest. The forts opened fire, which was returned by the Japanese when they had reached a point about four miles abreast the *Retzvisan*. The *Baian*, *Askold* and *Novik* left the harbor in the order named, in echelon, concentrating their fire on the head of the Japanese line. The firing lasted about one hour, when the *Askold* returned to the harbor with a heavy list to starboard and slightly sunken astern, caused by water in her after compartment. The *Novik* was hit forward, but not seriously injured. The Japanese line of twelve ships, which were first sighted at a distance of eight miles, when they had reached within four miles of the forts, steamed away and joined the three Japanese ships on the east, where the fleet disappeared.

Vessels of the Japanese fleet which was commanded by Admiral Togo were sighted daily on the Kuang-tung coast. Port Arthur and Dalny were now systematically invested by sea. The Japanese scouted the west coast, where they were

## *Loss of the Sea*

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repeatedly fired on from the defenses overlooking Pigeon Bay. At midnight of Wednesday, March 9th, the Japanese fleet began a bombardment of Port Arthur from the direction of Pigeon Bay, and from a protected position near the Liao-ti-shan promontory. It was estimated that two hundred twelve-inch Russian shells captured on the Russian Volunteer Fleet steamer *Manchuria* were thrown into the New Town and into the bay and the forts guarding the entrance to the harbor. The attack was in effect a comprehensive example of all the formidable bombardments by the Japanese throughout the year and continuing until the fall of the fortress. The Russians described the Japanese fire as greatly superior in accuracy to what it had been heretofore. The signal stations reported the Japanese fleet of unusual size and it was suspected of having transports.

A part of the fleet under the Liao-ti-shan promontory received its firing directions by signal from the main body of the fleet at sea. The firing continued until 2 P.M. of the 10th. The New Town was unsafe in any part, and when the bombardment ceased, fragments of shells could be found everywhere. Owing to the fact that the buildings in the New Town were scattered, and that most of the region was unoccupied land, the fire of the Japanese was largely ineffective, but the bombardment proved how dangerous could be an attack from the sea when the enemy chose to shell important parts of the fortress. A squad of twenty soldiers was destroyed and three civilians were reported killed. One entire family was destroyed by a shell that struck the dinner table where they were assembled. Colonel Vershinen, the mayor, was slightly wounded. Five houses in the New Town and two passenger coaches at the railway station were destroyed. Three ships of the fleet were struck at their anchorages. The *Retzian*, which had only been got off the rocks a short time before, was struck, losing some

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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men by the shots it received. The *Petropavlovsk* and *Diana* were only slightly injured. The Golden Hill forts were damaged.

One of the consequences to the Russians of this successful bombardment was the disheartening effect produced by the fact that the ammunition was their own, and among the hardest things which the Russian soldiers endured throughout the whole progress of the war, was the punishment inflicted by their own guns and ammunition in the hands of the enemy. At the very outset began this grief, which only ended with the close of the war and after the captured guns of Port Arthur had been turned on the Russian armies at Mukden.

The Japanese fleet had for three weeks effected considerable damage to the fortifications, especially by their fire from the Pigeon Bay side of the peninsula, where the Russian defenses were inadequate. Defenses were, therefore, ordered constructed so as to command the sea there, especially close to shore. Signal stations were established with such equipment as was necessary to identify all ships. The entrenchments and barbed-wire defenses which figured so conspicuously in the siege by land later on were commenced, and artillery from disabled war vessels was distributed, especially at points on the west.

A new life had commenced in Port Arthur. The garrison was looking forward to a siege. The civilians remaining by invitation of the military had accustomed themselves to the state of war and were trying to meet the requirements of the military ordinance which governed their affairs. There appears to have been some difficulty in their doing this, for about this time three merchants were punished for raising prices. The restaurants were open and the food supply was still normal. As the railway communications were still intact such luxuries as fresh caviare could be had. One *café*

chantant was still running, although this element, and the *demi-mondaine* who had not been able to enlist as Red Cross nurses, were largely in reserve at Liao-yang, where several establishments were in existence. The naval band played daily in the little park overlooking the naval dock, where the workmen were repairing the *Pallada*. The traffic in the streets consisted entirely of ammunition and armaments. The fortress administration was bringing in stores, especially ammunition, and was building a mud dock as a means of repairing the *Czarevitch*, which was too large for and could not be got into the Port Arthur dry dock.

The Russians had a curious conviction that the Japanese ships were being commanded by British officers, a form of suspicion which had various manifestations throughout the war. The Scotch engineer, having completed the task of floating the *Retzvian*, departed, and was the last Anglo-Saxon in the fortress.

Admiral Makaroff, who had been sent from St. Petersburg, assumed command of the fleet of the Eastern Empire at Port Arthur on the eve of these important Japanese attacks, which had the appearance of being offered as a form of salutation and reception, especially considering that so large a quantity of Russian ammunition had signalized the event. Admiral Makaroff was absent at Dalny some time during the attacks, inspecting the fortifications there and the damages to them, but on Friday, the eleventh of March, on board the *Novik*, he led the depleted fleet out of the harbor, and, though no enemy was seen, this exploit, carried out so soon after his arrival, excited the admiration of the garrison. For eleven days preceding the bombardment, Port Arthur had been free from attack, and was entirely preoccupied with its internal affairs.

The arrival of Admiral Makaroff appears to have been the signal for precipitating that series of misfortunes which

rapidly extinguished the entire navy of the Eastern Empire. Makaroff was determined to weaken the enemy, and therefore to fight on the high seas as early as possible. Togo pursued such tactics as it was hoped would inveigle Makaroff into ambush. The Russians had steadily evaded contest with the superior Japanese fleet, and were devising plans to reinforce with ships from Europe. On account of the disability of the *Czarevitch*, *Retzvisan* and *Pallada*, which could not possibly be repaired under six months, Makaroff was charged with fearing the loss of the fleet if it remained at Port Arthur and was believed by the Japanese to wish to escape with it and to join the Vladivostok fleet or the European fleet. The Viceroy Alexieff's officers took occasion to make an official denial of this fear.

Makaroff for ten days busied the swift cruisers of his fleet with scouting, going out as far as twelve miles or more with the object of enticing the Japanese within range of the fortress artillery. On the night of the twenty-first of March the Japanese made a torpedo attack at the harbor entrance, and between nine and eleven o'clock in the morning of the twenty-second they bombarded the city and harbor as they had done on the tenth, using an equal number of the large caliber shells taken from the *Manchuria*. The Japanese again used the Liao-ti-shan promontory to conceal their ships. During this bombardment the Russian artillerists having profited by the Japanese example of indirect fire returned the Japanese fire and were able to report having injured one of the Japanese ships. The *Retzvisan* from her anchorage participated in the combat, firing over the promontory.

The defenses facing the sea were now so effective that the casualties from a bombardment by a Japanese fleet were largely accidental, and the damage was principally to buildings. The forts carried on experimental firing under direction from the ships at sea. The fleet was able to muster nine

scouting vessels besides a torpedo boat flotilla. Having presumably placed himself in control, and by the confidence which he inspired established a certain *esprit de corps*, Admiral Makaroff on March 30, 1904, issued this proclamation:

“The Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Fleet makes known what follows: Every vessel of war or of commerce which shall be discovered in the Sphere of the Theater of War having no lights by night or flags by day and which does not hoist them after having been warned to do so by a cannon shot, will be considered as belonging to the enemy and will be sunk.”

Official telegrams had announced that Admiral Makaroff had taken the entire fleet outside to reconnoiter. This statement placed the navy of the Eastern Empire in an unexpected new light, and together with the commander’s proclamation showed that with little more than a score of vessels—of which five were battle-ships and four were cruisers—Admiral Makaroff was resolved if not confident. It was but two weeks until the bitter prophecies of the detractors of the Russian fleet were ironically justified by the disaster to the flagship *Petropavlovsk*. On Wednesday, April 13th, the fleet left the harbor upon the appearance of a small Japanese squadron, which they pursued until they came in sight of a fleet of twenty-nine ships, when they put about. Within sight of the harbor entrance, upon returning, the battle-ship *Petropavlovsk* struck a mine and capsized. The details of the tragedy could not be seen from the shore. With Admiral Makaroff was his life-long friend, the famous painter Verestchagin, and these gentlemen, together with Admiral Molas, forty-five officers and all the crew of 600, save thirty-two men, were lost. The ship sank within thirty seconds.

Grand Duke Cyril was also aboard the *Petropavlovsk*. He related that he was standing on the bridge at the moment

of the explosion, which threw him from his position onto a gun below, from where he fell into the sea and was saved. Small boats and sampans put out from the harbor, but were too late to render any assistance. Nothing was afterward seen but the top of the masts at low tide. It was believed at the time that the fleet had been inveigled into ambush and that the flagship had remained in the rear of the line to protect it from Japanese assault, while the fleet was trying to make the harbor, and that it had been torpedoed. This seemed credible, especially as at the same time the officials reported that the battle-ship *Pobeda* was damaged amidships by a mine. The official reports were discredited because ships coming in direct contact with mines when in motion are damaged forward of the middle. But no other account than that the *Petropavlovsk* struck a Russian floating mine or a mine previously laid in the fleet's course by the Japanese was acceptable. A Russian torpedo boat was lost, but the rest of the action was unimportant compared with the loss of Makaroff and Veretschagin, and the *Petropavlovsk*. The event was one of the profoundest, tragic and spectacular in history. It moved the whole world at the time. But one other event on sea during the war was to be compared to it, and that was the loss of the Imperial Russian Fleet under Rodjestvensky, which had sailed ten thousand miles to restore a measure of sea power to the Eastern Empire. The Japanese official report took no direct credit, but simply stated that a torpedo attack was made at Port Arthur on the thirteenth, that a Russian torpedo boat was sunk and a ship, understood to have been the flagship *Petropavlovsk*, was destroyed by Japanese mines laid at the entrance the evening before.

To the Russians, religious and sentimental as, generally speaking, they are, this co-ordination of disasters was supernatural, and perhaps there is no people that could withstand

## *Loss of the Sea*

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the conviction which such disasters inspire of being in their nature the interference of God. For twenty-four hours the event was kept secret by the Russian officials, although it was apparent to the uninformed that some event of unusual magnitude had taken place. Those who had occasion to call upon officials, found their orderlies in tears. The fate of Verestchagin was especially pitiful because he had spent his whole life trying to teach the human race peace, and had come in his old age to this boiling hot crater, so that he might catch perhaps a final horror with which to convince mankind. Days after this event one met with high Russian officers distracted and preoccupied, and sometimes employing little subterfuges against themselves to restrain their tears and to divert their thoughts, a phenomenon which will not strike as strange those who know how powerful are the feelings of a Russian when once moved.

This crowning disaster to the fleet seemed to terminate all promise of any successful adventure by the navy and to anticipate its final complete extinction, and at the same time it accentuated the conviction that the sea had been finally lost to the Eastern Empire and to Russia on the day of the opening of the war, when this same Port Arthur squadron had been hammered into the harbor entrance, when the Chemulpo squadron had been destroyed and the Japan Sea cleared of the Vladivostok squadron and of the auxiliary ships that were at the time making their way to Eastern Empire ports with war material.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PLAN OF WAR

**A**T the end of February, after having issued his proclamation to the Manchurians, Alexieff visited the Tartar general at his capital at Mukden to impress him with the gravity and necessities of the situation and to establish the seat of government of the Eastern Empire in Mukden, the capital of Manchuria, where he expected to secure the co-operation of the native government. On March 3d he returned to Port Arthur to remove the government bureaus of the Eastern Empire, which were now largely those of civil affairs, since it had been decided in St. Petersburg that the command of the fleet was to be entrusted to Makaroff, while the Russian Minister of War, Kourapatkin, was to command the Russian Grand Army in person.

Within a month of the outbreak of hostilities, a plan of war was made known. The defense of the outer frontiers of the Eastern Empire, according to this plan, was regarded as unattainable, and the Government expressed its intention of falling back indefinitely before the Japanese advance and until the land forces of the Eastern Empire, numbering one hundred and twenty-five thousand, so it said, had been augmented by troops of the Emperor to three hundred thousand men.

The isolation of Port Arthur was a foregone conclusion, and one of the first provisions was for establishing wireless telegraph communications with the opposite shore of the Gulf of Chih-li. The railway to Port Arthur was protected to an extent by the natural formation of the country. On

## *The Plan of War*

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the east was a barrier of hills. It was desired to keep open the railway over which supplies were being all the time hurried to Port Arthur, as long as possible.

At the Niu-ch'uang frontier, on the southwest, there was an almost indefensible plain, which it was desirable to hold as long as possible. Although General Kondradovitch at the beginning of April, being able to make a temporary show of four thousand troops, declared that he was ready for any attack, the Russians had no hope of being able to do this after the opening of the Liao River. The fortifying of the mouth of the Liao River was simultaneous with the reinforcing of the Kin-chou Isthmus and the fortification of the west bank of the Yalu River. Cossack patrols were placed along the gulf coast and reached from K'ai-chou westward, an outpost being established at Kou-pang-tzu on the Shanghai-kuan Railway in so-called neutral territory. Japanese ships had appeared off the coast, and it was considered not improbable that scouts and large bodies of troops might be landed. It was pointed out that in the sixties, during the Anglo-French and China War, French cavalry had been landed on the ice on these coasts.

While patrolling the country for seventy-five miles west of the Liao River, Alexeieff published his proclamation defining the limits of military operations to which the Russian forces proposed to confine themselves. The western boundary was given as the Liao River on the southwest. As Niu-ch'uang was thus exposed to the imminent possibility of invasion, and promised to be an early battle-ground, the Russian military increased their forces there and the Russian civil element itself made preparations to abandon Niu-ch'uang at the first alarm. The disasters to the Russian fleet had been so fearful that the little gunboat *Sivootch* sawed off her main-mast and began to dismantle.

The Russians were in great need of troops. Reserves

began to arrive in February from Irkutsk and made their way south from Harbin. The Japanese were mobilizing in northern Korea, and Colonel Madridoff, who had been in northern Korea for nearly a year, and had displayed a considerable force on the Yalu the first week in February, was in touch with the Japanese. For picturesqueness, villainy and romance his command was conspicuous throughout the war. The Third Siberian Brigade (except for two or three battalions, in the vicinity of Niu-ch'uang) was distributed along the main line of railway; the Tenth Regiment near K'ai-chou; the Ninth at Hai-ch'eng, and the Twelfth at Liao-yang. The Eleventh Regiment left Niu-ch'uang on March 16th and arrived at Ta-shih-ch'iao on the 17th, when a simultaneous movement by the entire brigade was made eastward to sweep the whole of southern Manchuria to the Yalu. Hsu-yen and the Mo-t'ien mountains were passed on the twentieth of March and the Yalu was reached and occupied from An-tung to Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng at the end of the month.

Fortifications were built at An-tung and at Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng. The fortification of Ta-shih-ch'iao, Hai-ch'eng and An-shan-chan in the interior was begun. A large military park was established at Liao-yang, the army base, whence were forwarded re-enforcements of such troops as were received to the Yalu by way of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road, to the south coast by the main line railway, and to Niu-ch'uang.

The absence of any land conflicts after one month of war brought out the criticism upon the Japanese that they had failed to follow up the advantage which they had gained by the first blow. The first land engagements began to be reported in the early days of March. Madridoff's cavalry came in contact with the Japanese outposts and exchanged shots with them at P'ing-yang on February 28th. On the

## *The Plan of War*

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eighth of March one Japanese officer and four soldiers, captured south of the Yalu, were paraded through the streets of Mukden. Toward the end of the month, General Mischenko was in command of a brigade of cavalry beyond the Yalu and reported that the Japanese front parallel to the Yalu intersecting An-ju was forty-five miles in length. On the 26th the Russian forces had retired before these demonstrations of the enemy to Wi-ju, on the south bank of the Yalu. Mischenko engaged a squadron of Japanese cavalry and three companies of infantry near Kazan on the An-ju road, losing three officers killed and sixteen men wounded.

On the first of March a Japanese squadron appeared off Vladivostok and bombarded the city and fortress, continuing its attacks, without doing any damage, at intervals for a week. Some two hundred shells or so fell inside of the fortified zone and it was reported that only about eighty of them exploded. The entire coast of the Ussuri province was threatened, since now the ice had begun to disappear from the harbors.

A Russian military highway was established south from Vladivostok to Possiet Bay, where it was possible for hostile forces to land. The Russian and Japanese afterward came in touch along the lower course of the Tumen River, but no important engagements were fought there until on the eve of peace, when a condition of that immortal scandal that accompanied every Russian endeavor was disclosed and among other things it was found that the Russian commander had violated the observance of neutrality established by the fact of the existence of peace negotiations.

By the time the Russian Minister of War, Kouropatkin—who had left Russia the middle of March—arrived at the army base, Liao-yang, the military forces of the Empire of Japan were in contact with the army and fleet of the Eastern Empire from Saghalen to Port Arthur in a straight

line 1,200 miles in length. Russia and Japan were confronting each other on a line parallel to her frontiers dividing the Eastern Empire, and along which there were now continuous hostilities.

Kouropatkin began his inspection of the land forces immediately upon his arrival. On April 6th he visited Niuch'uang, inspected the breastworks and the installation of mines in the river, and reviewed three or four thousand troops that had been assembled for the occasion, and which represented the defense of the entire north coast of the Gulf of Liao-tung from K'ai-chou to the Liao River and surveillance of the region extending beyond the Liao to Kou-pang-tzu.

Long before these events the Manchurians had thrashed the war to tatters. The foreign military had usurped their land at certain points for military reservations and commandeered their property, and events to them were of greater importance than anything that had ever before occurred. Curiously enough, their confidence was on the side of the Japanese, who had only a few years before successfully invaded and conquered all of the country which the Russians now proposed to defend, and only ended their campaign at An-shan-chan (Saddle Mountain Station), which the Russians were hurriedly fortifying. While General Linievitch, previous to Kouropatkin's arrival, had been busily organizing the miscellaneous forces of the Eastern Empire gathered from Port Arthur and the eastern provinces of Siberia, Manchurian rumor brought the Japanese across the Yalu and up the Feng-huang-ch'eng and Hsu-yen roads, over the great eastern passes, as well as up the Fu-chou and K'ai-chou roads, and even into Port Arthur, precisely in accordance with the exploits of the Japanese in the Chinese-Japanese War. Native rumor, springing from the premonitions of those who had observed the prowess of the Japanese

## *The Plan of War*

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nine years before, would not have attracted the consideration of outsiders had it not in every important respect coincided with the after course of events. The Russians throughout the course of the war observed with what exasperating obstinacy the Chinese expected and prepared to receive the Japanese, while adroitly exploiting both armies.

Native life was practically undisturbed. The intention of the Russians was to maintain from the first a generous consideration for the personal well-being of the Chinese, a necessity which as experienced past invaders and conquerors they well understood. Troops flowed slowly into the land, keeping up a regular military traffic along the railway and the roads leading to the Yalu. At first many of the large Chinese shops were closed, but the patronage of the military soon persuaded them to open and it greatly increased the prosperity of the native markets. In places like Liao-yang the appropriation of inns, and the encroachment of the military upon temple property and go-downs occasioned great inconvenience to the Chinese and some suffering, until some recompense could be allowed, but it was found that the authorities desired to compensate the natives generously for such things as were a military necessity. This does not, however, refer to the great mass of injury and injustice which was visited upon the helpless by all classes of Russians in Manchuria, which will be spoken of in another place.

General Kouropatkin had not finished his inspection of the advanced position in southern Manchuria before Makaroff was lost and the naval branch of the Military was without a head. This was the greatest emergency which up to this time the Eastern Empire had been called upon to meet. The effect was more disastrous than if merely a few ships had been lost. Although there were several admirals of secondary rank at Port Arthur, the loss of Makaroff had made such a breach, both in so far as skill and experience

were concerned, and in mastery over the personnel of the fleet, that there was none to name in his place. In this serious situation the Viceroy himself, Admiral Alexeieff, stepped into the breach. He was at the time established in the Manchurian capital in the rear of the military base, but he hurried to Port Arthur to encourage and strengthen the demoralized garrison, as on the morning of February 9th he had appeared on the forts on Golden Hill to cheer the artillerymen.

The outbreak of war had created such bitterness between Russians and other nationalities in the East, that even a friendly interest in Russian affairs was regarded with suspicion, and sympathy was looked at askance. But now the Russians of the Eastern Empire seemed for the first time to pause and think in their mad career, and to feel in the universal sympathy for the loss of Makaroff the touch of genuine human nature which makes all kin. Of all the Port Arthur fleet, besides a small flotilla of torpedo boats, only the three battle-ships, *Perseviet*, *Sebastopol* and *Poltava* remained uninjured and retained their maximum strength. All the cruisers had been hit and more or less seriously damaged, either at sea or in the harbor during the various bombardments. The Government in St. Petersburg named Admiral Skrydloff as Makaroff's successor, but he never reached his command, proceeding instead to Vladivostok. The isolation of Port Arthur forced Alexeieff to retire northward and the responsibility for the remnants of the fleet devolved upon Admiral Witgeft and Prince Uktomsky.

## CHAPTER XI

### DESTRUCTION OF THE LINE OF DEFENSE OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE

THE land campaign was in full swing when the Russians retired from Korean territory in April to the first line of defense on the Yalu, where the first battle was fought on land. This region had been thoroughly examined by the Russian military and they had nearly two months in which to fortify it. In March breastworks were being built on the west bank at An-tung and natives were forbidden to move back and forth across the border. The military road from Liao-yang by way of Feng-huang-ch'eng began to break up when the thaw set in, and the bridges, which were temporary, were in many places partly inundated by the melting snows and rains. By the first of April the thin line of Russian troops making its way to the Yalu to support the advance guard falling back from Korea, was struggling under these formidable disadvantages. The soldiers, who had come one hundred miles from the army base, where they had detrained, were reported by travelers footsore and weary.

It was believed to be the Japanese plan to force the Yalu in March, but it was the last of April before they arrived there. Notwithstanding their enterprise in mobilizing in Korea, they had not been able to advance beyond An-ju before the break-up of winter. The two armies, therefore, struggled through heavy roads to their meeting place. By the last of April General Sassulitch, commanding the Russian army, had two small divisions, the third and the sixth, in position. About April 22d the St. Petersburg Government

announced that there were 300,000 Russian soldiers in Manchuria and that this was enough, and that no more men would be sent, at least for the present. Of these 300,000 men Sassulitch did not possess more than 15,000 with which to defend the first line of defense, although according to the plan of war, which it was well understood the Government approved—the magnitude of this force was a matter of no great importance, since its duty was to fall back if hard pressed. It was sufficient with which to begin on land the misfortunes that had commenced on sea.

The higher Russian military authorities, not in touch with the field of operation, held that this army could only serve as a buffer in maintaining contact with the Japanese invaders but the army itself took an entirely different view.

The writer, who was not present on the field of the battles in the Liao-tung Peninsula, but was at the army base, gives the observations of Russians who were present, to connect up the narrative of Port Arthur with those other events and scenes in which he personally participated.

The Japanese under Kuroki, numbering at least forty thousand, began their attack on the Russian positions at Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng and An-tung on the first of May. The Twelfth Regiment bore the brunt of Kuroki's attack and was supported by the Ninth and Eleventh. The artillery at An-tung was silenced by Japanese siege guns at Wi-ju; and the Ninth and Eleventh regiments retired on Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng, where the Japanese began their determined frontal assaults which distinguished the greatest battles of the war. The Tenth Regiment retired to the ammunition base in the rear of Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng, where were two battalions of the Twenty-second Infantry.

Although General Sassulitch had been warned by Kourapatkin to provide for his retreat, his army was flanked on the left, May 2d, the second day of the battle, and the



Getting the guns over the mountains of the Eastern Barrier



## *Destruction of the Line of Defense*

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Eleventh Regiment, which was to form the rear guard, was surrounded. It had to fight its way back. The Twenty-second Regiment behaved badly, but the Eleventh distinguished itself according to Russian traditions, charging the enemy, with a priest and a brass band at the head. Twenty-one field guns and eight machine guns were lost. Seventy officers were lost, of whom twenty-six were killed and six captured. The losses entire were 2,395, and the army retreated in disorder to Feng-huang-ch'eng.

The Russians discovered at this battle the nature of the Japanese tactics and their behavior under fire, and it is but a mild statement of the nature of their feelings to say that they were surprised. All Russians, including generals, in this battle regarded the Japanese as mad in declaring war, and ridiculed them. They did not believe that the Japanese could bring large guns to the Yalu, and were taken completely by surprise when fired upon by fortress guns stationed at Wi-ju. The Japanese flanking force appearing from the north across the River Ai was likewise a surprise.

All of the Russian preparations proved to be inadequate, as were their ideas. Their trenches were small, for which there was no excuse except that they did not believe in the necessity of formidable works, but thought that the bayonet could do all that the bullet failed in. This confession was a lamentable admission of that foolish contempt in which the Japanese were held by them. The whole battle was a disaster to the Eastern Detachment and a catastrophe to the Grand Army. General Sassulitch was condemned publicly, was relieved of command and was formally in disgrace. The Japanese, who had by the achievements of their fleet divided the Eastern Empire, had now broken its line of defense. But the Russian general staff reports of the Battle of Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng said the Japanese had been "butchered like sheep"!

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CAPITAL SEGREGATED

THE failure of the sea forces had led the Russians to rely upon an engagement inland with which to check the Japanese advance. But the nature of the Russian defeat on the Yalu was so discouraging that the precise nature of subsequent events was widely prophesied and a feud began among the various elements of the Imperial Russian forces which continues to this day. The naval element, which had been bitterly reproached by the army, looked upon the defeat as something of a vindication of themselves.

The rapid advance of the Japanese along the entire line from Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng to Port Arthur now resulted in one of the most important battles of the war. General Oku began to land an army at Pi-tzü-wo at the north border of Russian leased territory and immediately marched upon the Kin-chou Isthmus. He arrived at the defenses of the city of Kin-chou and Nan-shan on May 21st and began to invest them. General Stoessel opposed his attacks for five days with about 15,000 troops in extensive defenses. The Russian troops at the front were this early strongly impressed with the seriousness of the Japanese. The cavalry patrolling the coast related that the first landing parties of Oku's army waded ashore under fire and ducked under the water to escape the bullets, only coming up for air. The Viceroy, Alexeieff, escaped from Port Arthur by the last train, which was reported struck by Japanese bullets.

## *The Capital Segregated*

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The Russian works on the isthmus were the most formidable in the Eastern Empire, except those of Vladivostok and Port Arthur. Naval and fortress guns of six and eight-inch caliber commanded both the land and sea approaches. It took Oku four days to take the outlying positions of General Stoessel's army, and General Stoessel, after five hours of the most severe attacks that the Russian forces had yet endured, retired to his main defenses. During the night of the 25th a Japanese gunboat squadron entered Kin-chou Bay and on the morning of the 26th, when Oku was ready to attack, the Russian positions were enfiladed by the fire of the gun-boats. General Stoessel, having been compelled to retire from the environs of Kin-chou, now fought in his intrenchments around Nan-shan the last day's defense of the isthmus. The storming of these works by the Japanese greatly exceeded in desperation the frontal attack at the Yalu. They lasted throughout the day and compelled General Stoessel to retreat just after dark. The Japanese took possession of the isthmus before midnight.

The first day of the battle opened with an artillery duel, in which shrapnel was principally used. In the strong Japanese frontal attacks, machine guns came into use. The line of battle was so curtailed by the narrowness of the isthmus that on the morning of the 26th, under cover of the fire from their gunboats, Japanese infantry advanced through the shallow water on the west, with the idea of turning the Russian position. The Russian infantry waded out to meet them and a rifle engagement took place in the water, but the strategy was sufficient to turn the scale of battle. According to the official reports the losses of the Japanese in this attack upon fortified positions was considerably greater in proportion to the loss of the Russians than in any subsequent battles. General Kouropatkin does not seem ever to have defended any of his elaborate works so economically as General Stoess-

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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sel did in the battle of the Kin-chou Isthmus. The Russians killed and wounded were 700, including 30 officers. The Japanese losses were 4,304, of whom 131 were officers. No use was made by General Stoessel of the defenses of Dzny, which was itself burned and evacuated immediately after the fight. The Japanese deliberately occupied the Kuang-tung Peninsula. General Stoessel abandoned the fortress artillery at Nan-shan, which had been a part of the original defenses of Port Arthur. The Japanese claimed to have taken sixty-eight heavy guns and ten machine guns. The battle of the Isthmus of Kin-chou further increased the prestige of the Japanese, and, because it was a signal victory, greatly enhanced their reputation. By this battle the Eastern Empire lost the leased territory and communication with its military capital. At the same time, it could no longer claim an inferiority of defensive forces as an excuse for defeat. Stoessel abandoned the upper part of the peninsula almost before the Japanese could occupy it, falling back from his fortifications at Ta-lien-wan and Nangalen. So far it was the most desperately fought battle of the war.



Flight! Chinese family fleeing from troops

## CHAPTER XIII

### LIAO-TUNG LOST

**I**N less than two months of the land campaign the Empire had been twice divided; once at the Yalu and once at the Kin-chou Isthmus. Its fleet and merchant marine was detached, crippled, partly destroyed and blockaded; its chief fortress was isolated, and its armies, twice beaten, were withdrawing at all points touched by the enemy.

Now that another Japanese army—that of Oku—was located, General Kourapatkin gathered an army to send against its rear to worry its descent upon Port Arthur and to establish hostilities with it, to engage, and to defeat it if possible. General Stackelberg, who was a court favorite, was placed in command. He had a force of about 35,000 men—of which the First Siberian Corps constituted the bulk—including 3,500 cavalry under General Samsonoff, and his army was equipped with ninety guns. He scouted the country in Oku's rear and advanced his forces to Wa-fang-tien. By this time a new Japanese army, the Fourth Army, had been formed and was landing on the east at Ta-ku-shan. The Third Japanese Army of Nogi was landing at Dalny to besiege Port Arthur, and General Oku, holding the Kin-chou Isthmus, turned his main body northward to meet Stackelberg's army.

General Stackelberg showed great anxiety to meet the Japanese. He was known as a favorite of the Empress-Dowager of Russia, and had come with much acclaim with the evident intention of winning the first great victory over

the enemy. General Oku's fighting force advanced on the 13th and 14th, when General Stackelberg took up a position to the north of Wa-fang-tien toward Te-li-ssu and awaited attack. He announced that he now had the Japanese in just such a position as he wanted them, and they attacked on the morning of the 14th. The battle lasted throughout the 15th, during which the Japanese advanced fully ten miles. Their attack was distinguished by such accuracy of artillery fire as to astonish even the French and German military observers who were present. Before the close of the first day Stackelberg's center was broken and his right by evening was turned in and he should have withdrawn in the night. A witness said that after the battle got under way the Japanese discovered and put out of action one Russian battery within three or four minutes. The Russians fell back from their defenses at the Fu-chou River and gathered about a temple and village called Te-li-ssu on the railway. General Samsonoff reported Japanese infantry moving in large bodies to the Russian right, but the reports were discredited or ignored. In twenty-four hours the inspiration which Stackelberg had thought to infuse into his army corps was broken and men were running away. Their movements at first could be located by the rising dust, but a rain soon set in, such as accompanies prolonged artillery firing at such seasons, which removed the threatened danger of rout.

The Japanese infantry had established itself in close contact with the Russian right by dawn and the Japanese artillery began to shell the Russian main body. Reserves that attempted to check the advance of the Japanese on the Russian right, and who hurried forward on the double-quick accompanied by Cossacks, were seen a few minutes after hurriedly retreating, pursued by shrapnel. By one o'clock in the afternoon, all of Stackelberg's army was infected with

retreat, the soldiers that retired from the positions, pushing on to the northward the troops that had been in reserve.

Having dislodged the Russian artillery in detail, the Japanese commander pushed forward his infantry, with which he advanced a day's march and sent General Stackelberg with such momentum to the rear that the army did not stop until it had reached K'ai-chou, while the camp followers did not stop until they had reached Liao-yang, the army base.

General Gerngrosz had made something of a defense on the left flank, but when the center and right retired could do nothing, and succumbed to the demoralization. Many of the officers were disgusted at the performance of the troops, which they said was scandalous. About five thousand men were killed, wounded and lost, and Stackelberg retired by train to K'ai-chou and to Ta-shih-ch'iao. His army spent all the day of the 16th and the 17th in the retreat made in the rain with great labor over heavy roads to K'ai-chou. The battle was a rifle and artillery engagement over a very extended field, the First Siberian Corps reaching about ten miles. According to the reports of spectators the battle had an uncanny nature. "During the whole engagement," said an observer, "I only saw of the enemy three horsemen who mounted a hill, drew the Russian fire and disappeared." The troops themselves, mostly simple peasants, to whom this was the first engagement, received the profound impressions regarding modern engines of war, which they retained throughout the war. The army struggled back to its base assisted by the railway, which picked up the wounded and stragglers.

This third battle of the land campaign was likewise a disaster. The neutral zone of the leased territory and the Peninsula of Liao-tung was lost. The Japanese, it is true, withdrew to their base of supplies for recuperation and to

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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leave the railway open for the Russians to return. The Russians a week afterward scouted the country as far as Wa-fang-tien before they encountered Japanese outposts.

General Stackelberg was relieved of the command and returned to Liao-yang to explain his defeat. The entire operation was criticised for the reasons that a long advance had been made to fight a losing battle, and that Stackelberg had placed himself in a position where he might have been easily cut off, and that it was only an error on the part of General Oku that this was not done.

The Japanese troops which had landed at Ta-ku-shan about the middle of May began to press the Russian line in the center of Hsu-yen, and the entire Japanese line had covered half the distance from the coast to Liao-yang, the Russian base. It now moved forward to the occupation of K'ai-chou. General Oku moved up above Wa-fang-tien, where he came in contact with the infantry division under General Kondradovitch.

Nodzu's forces from the east that had arrived via Ta-ku-shan, began to move west from Hsu-yen on June 21st. On the 22d and 23d Russian cavalry met them in skirmishes as they advanced upon K'ai-chou.

On June 25th General Oku's forces on the sea road parallel with the Liao-tung gulf coast, advanced north from Fu-chou to within sixteen kilometers of K'ai-chou. On the south and east they were eleven kilometers distant.

The Japanese troops which had landed at Ta-ku-shan followed the boundary line of the neutral zone referred to in the Czar's lease of the Kuang-tung territory, and having passed Hsu-yen on the road to K'ai-chou, the entire Japanese line moved forward, exchanging shots with the Russians, who made no important resistance. A Japanese naval squadron visited the head of the Liao-tung Gulf. The whole peninsula was passing from the Russian grasp. Oku

## *Liao-Tung Lost*

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rapidly cleared it of Russian outposts. On the 28th the Japanese shelled the K'ai-chou railway station and took possession of the town, completing their occupation of the entire Liao-tung Peninsula, and now possessed all of Kuang-tung and the neutral zone there, except Port Arthur, which was by this time closely invested by Nogi. Simultaneous with the advance up the Fu-chou road on June 25th, the Ta-ku-shan column moved up from Hsu-yen and on the day Oku entered K'ai-chou occupied the first of the large mountain passes on the road to Hai-ch'eng. Ta-shih-ch'iao, on the main line railway at the intersection of the Niu-ch'uang branch, was now but seventeen miles distant, the possession of which by the Japanese would deprive the Eastern Empire of its southern sea. By this time the interior affairs of the Eastern Empire, owing to the duress of the army and the distress of Russia, the congestion of native commerce, the hope and need of victory, the war traffic on the railway line of communication, had reached a state of which the smallest details were the chief news of the world.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE ARMY BASE—A NEW MILITARY CAPITAL

WHEN Kouropatkin arrived in Manchuria the first of April there was the nucleus of an army collected there under the direction of General Linievitch, who now retired to Harbarvosk, the capital of the Ussuri Province, where he had been in command of the military forces of the Primorsk, and from where he had come. It was a very miscellaneous Grand Army, and was named by the War Department The Manchurian Army.

By the last of April the interior towns along the railway had an unprecedented appearance. The gay pink and red shirts of the Siberian reserves and camp followers, especially to be seen in the hamlets of An-shan-chan and Ta-shih-ch'iao gave them a gala appearance. At these places had already arrived Siberian artillery, which could be seen on a sunny day maneuvering in the plains. In lieu of sappers, the Engineers' Department had employed large gangs of Chinese workmen who were scoring the hillsides with trenches, especially at An-shan-chan, which was a picturesque spot and a strong natural position. Little redoubts and rifle trenches were plainly visible on the smaller elevations.

Similar activities were going on along the mountain roads radiating from Liao-yang to the southeast and east, where a second line of defense, which on the south began at Ta-shih-ch'iao, swept in a semicircle to the northeast through Feng-shui-ling, Lien-shan-kuan on the Feng-huang-ch'eng road to the upper T'ai-tzü River.

Liao-yang, the army base, with a native population of perhaps 80,000, on the left bank of the T'ai-tzü, is an ancient walled city, which was eminent as the capital of the State of Liao before the existence of Mukden, the capital of the Manchus, though only the relics of its ancient state are to be seen adjoining the present city on the north. It is set in a beautiful plain with a semicircle of hills on the south and east, three or four miles distant. Opposite the northwest corner of the city wall is an ancient thirteen-story pagoda. It overlooks the native city and the silver T'ai-tzü coming down out of the hills on the east, and on the west the railway settlement more than a mile in length, which was now the busy scene of military activity. In the rainy season it cast its reflection in an expanse of water reaching a quarter of a mile to the railway station, for the settlement at such times became a lake.

The Russians in Manchuria, who prided themselves upon imitating the Americans of the West, first built the houses and left the building of streets for the indefinite future. In the beginning the Russian railway had been obliged to give all walled cities a wide berth of more than three miles, but now it passed opposite the gates, and in this place the Chinese city itself had been altered to conform to the requirements of the settlement.

Already disgraced in the eyes of the Chinese by the encroachments of the railway, Liao-yang was now completely degraded by breaches made in all the walls. The Russian engineers, having laid out a military park several miles square adjoining the city on the west and constructed military roads in all directions, had taken out wide sections of the walls. A city without proper walls is to the Chinese like a person without proper clothes.

The defenses of this army base were already under construction and the Russian engineers proceeded exactly as

though they were making a stronghold of the native city whose fortifications they utilized. A fort was built at the northwest corner, and around the south wall was a line of earthworks intersecting two great redoubts. A levee was built along the T'ai-tzü to prevent these works from being submerged in case of flood, and the city was made to be a military extension of the high ground which approached it on the opposite bank of the river from the northeast. It is interesting to note that the strategy of the Japanese, as in all the other battles of the war, gave character to the battle of Liao-yang and prevented the city itself being turned into a battle-ground. Had this not happened in this case, it would have been an international crime, and it does not appear that the Russian military were entirely innocent of this design, although they had relied upon expelling the natives from the city in case it had been besieged. On the last day of the battle of Liao-yang the Russian commissare ordered the native officials to send the inhabitants away within twenty-four hours. The defensive native walls of the City of Liao-yang formed the western extension of the fortified eminences on the north bank of the T'ai-tzü River that defended the T'ai-tzü valley, and the fact that this order was given, together with the circumstance that the later plans of Russian fortifications did not involve the use of the existing defenses of native cities, seems to show that the Russians up to that time were indifferent to the people of the country and were prepared, so long as they believed in their all-sufficient strength, to make any sacrifices of the innocent inhabitants.

So completely was Liao-yang dominated by the Russian military that it may be said to have received its character from them. It was the only Chinese city in Manchuria, except Port Arthur and Harbin, where the native life was so overshadowed by the foreigners. Camp followers opened



General Kuropatkin and his staff, together with the Grand Duke Boris



hotels, restaurants and stores, and all the streets were ornamented with Russian signs. There were music halls and *cafés chantant*. Part of the Port Arthur *demi-mondaine* and *chansonnettes* took residence there, and it was said that seven gay establishments testified to their prosperity. All the native hostellries and temple buildings were appropriated for the use of troops. Sentries stood at the city gates and openings in the walls, and military police patrolled the streets.

The military reservation, of which the settlement was the center, was in dry weather a flat expanse, clouded with dust stirred up by the Mongolian winds, and in wet weather a low land of mire from which men and horses could at all times be seen trying to extricate themselves. All of the native buildings in the reservation were converted into lodging-houses, restaurants and shops of all kinds. Under the city wall were the engineers stores and machine shops; next came the Pagoda, where a restaurant was installed among the trees that had been a part of the temple grounds surrounding it, and here on summer evenings a band played, while the officers gathered for recreation. Next came the settlement buildings in Russian style, built for the accommodation of railway employees, but like everything connected with the Russian Government—and especially the steel coaches and the frontier guard of the railway—instantly convertible to the requirements of war. The military post-office, telegraphs, Red Cross, commissariat, and the general staff were now installed there. The commander-in-chief, General Kouropatkin, was established in a house opposite the station and partly cut off from view of it by a little wooden church in which official religious services were conducted upon all occasions. Beside his house was a pavilion extending over and sheltering a special train, in which the commander-in-chief spent much of his time, either at his

headquarters here or at some point on the railway. The pavilion was decorated with bunting and the headquarters' flag waved from a mast near by. The Grand Duke Boris was a guest of the commander-in-chief and a member of his staff, and occupied a house of his own, which was one of the sights of the army base.

West of the railway were the engine sheds, sidings and army stores. Ten to twenty locomotives stood on the sidings and were to be seen at all times shifting trains. It was a busy place, where every day the unloading of war materials, detraining of troops, and the extension of railway tracks and go-downs was going on. The borders of the reservation were soon dotted with camps. There were no regular barracks, and the troops that did not go at once to the positions were detained under canvas. The center of this scene was the railway station building extending one hundred yards along the east side of the main track and fortified on the north by a water tower and on the south by an immense magazine. It was a gray brick building of one story, the central section of which was occupied by a café and restaurant. This was the center of supreme interest. The gravel platform in front, where passengers from Europe and Siberia arrived and departed, was, in fair weather, dotted here and there with little tables at which men sat and drank amber-colored tea and liquors from beveled glasses, smoked cigarettes and ate their meals. The dining room flanking it had three long tables and a zakouska bar. There was an electric light plant, and in Manchuria there was almost a deluge of Russian and American kerosene, so that all assemblies were brilliantly lighted.

On a summer evening with the arrival of the military express from Moscow, the flash of headlights, the glitter of decorations and accouterments, such as the officers representing every tribe and nationality bore, rivaled the glow of

the kerosene lamps in the brilliance which they contributed to the scene.

Opposite the entrance to the station was a little square which had contained a flower bed, and back of this was a stand where a band sometimes played. About it troops were by day drawn up in review. At the station platform official dignitaries arriving in their special cars stopped to call on the commander-in-chief. The visitors would include the Viceroy Alexeieff, who would come down from Mukden to give and take counsel, and Prince Khilkoff, in charge of and responsible for the maintenance and operation of the great railway from Russia, which was the reliance of the Eastern Empire and therefore of the Government in St. Petersburg, the Czar and the Bureaucracy. There were also the numerous special hospital trains, equipped, paid for and maintained by members of the royal family, principally the ladies, and in charge of the younger princes and princesses. On such occasions the commander-in-chief, General Kourapatkin, with his numerous staff, could be seen making a formal inspection of them. The platform would be vacated in deference to him, and with his staff he could be observed to parade abreast the station, with his brilliant company the length of several coaches. On his left, the Grand Duke Boris; on his right, his chief of staff, General Sakaroff, or Kharkevitch, the quartermaster general, with seven or eight other officers of rank. Most picturesque of all was General Kourapatkin's personal Caucasian guard and orderly, in his long brown homespun surtout, his decorations dating from the days of Skobeleff, his astrakan cap shoved away from his forehead, and his showy Caucasian saber, dagger and ornamental cartridges.

Troops were arriving from Russia at the rate of one thousand to fifteen hundred a day. During the month of May, when the Eastern Detachment was retreating from Ch'i-u

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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lien-ch'eng before Kuroki, the transportation department claimed to have delivered 45,000 men at Liao-yang, Hai-ch'eng and Ta-shih-ch'iao; and 125,000 could not have been an overestimate of the number of Russian troops actively in the field and located along the second line of defense, leading from Ta-shih-ch'iao to the headquarters of the T'ai-tzü. General Kouropatkin had busied himself with a personal inspection of every position and every line of communication leading out of Liao-yang, in this quarter circle, and was watching the assembling of the enemy about him.

## CHAPTER XV

### KUROKI'S INVASION AND THE EASTERN DETACHMENT

THE first impressions received at the army base of the battle of Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng, the first large battle of the war, were derived from the wounded, who traveled as rapidly as the news itself. The testimony of military experts, both on the battlefield and off, was that the war would continue upon the same lines, and that the Russians would never gain a battle. Although this seemed an unfriendly prophecy there was not a day in the history of the Liao-yang-Feng-huang-ch'eng road when the wounded and the telegraphs did not bring back stories of reverses. General Sassulitch, in falling back from the Yalu, retreated to the interior mountains. He made no attempt to defend the city or the region of Feng-huang-ch'eng, for there was no position there, and he passed on without stop to the main position of Feng-shui-ling, a range of mountains barring the road to the Mo-t'ien-ling range. General Keller met the detachment at Tun-yuan-p'u on the seventh of June to take the place of General Sassulitch. He brought with him many decorations which he distributed among the officers and men—principally of the Eleventh and Twelfth regiments—who had distinguished themselves on the Yalu. The force was attacked on the same day in the front and on both flanks by infantry and cavalry and forced to retire, though the place was reoccupied the next day.

On the twenty-sixth of June, when Stackelberg's corps was back at K'ai-chou, the Easterly Detachment occupied the mountain passes of Feng-shui-ling, San-t'ou-ling and Mo-du-

ling in the Feng-shui-ling range. On the 28th, when Oku occupied K'ai-chou and the big pass northwest of Hsu-yen on the Hai-ch'eng road, the Eastern Detachment abandoned the big line of mountains in front of the Mo-tien-ling range and occupied the Pass of Three Pagodas or T'a-k'ou-ling and the Pass Si-k'a-ling and the Village of Ku-chia-p'u-tzu. On the twenty-ninth of June the Eastern Detachment, with headquarters at Ho-yen, was fronting eastward with the main force distributed on the mountains on the left bank of the Lang River, the cavalry working in the valley in front. Before the activities of General Kuroki, carried on, the Russian under-officers asserted, to divert them from more serious attempts to relieve Port Arthur, the Eastern Detachment had fallen back forty miles without a fight.

In June the summer rains set in, effectually suspending any extensive military operations. Toward the end of the month, when the Japanese forces from Hsu-yen arrived at the Great Pass, in the south of the Feng-shui-ling range on the road to Hai-ch'eng, General Kouropatkin visited the spot and looked down upon the Japanese army and then retired. His action in constantly submitting to the Japanese initiative gave the impression that the Japanese were pushing hard in all the mountain passes. Military operations were so difficult that no defense of the Pass was made. The Japanese retired to dry ground. The Russians sent back their Red Cross and baggage and remained inactive on account of the mud. Kouropatkin ordered the column of forty battalions which he had headed to retire, and after a day the pass was occupied by the Japanese with opposition.

The roads in the great Liao plain were impassable, while the upland bogs, which prevail in all the central Manchurian mountains, were dangerous. Owing to the demonstrations of Kuroki, who was now within little more than sixty miles of Liao-yang on the east, the bulk of the troops were

being detrained at Liao-yang station and kept moving in the direction of Mo-tien-ling down the Feng-huang-ch'eng road.

The situation of the Russian soldiers may be imagined from a description of the life and surroundings of the officers and civilians, who may be said to have lived a life of luxury within the walls of Liao-yang. The native houses were old, and being low, with floors on the ground, were now damp and musty. They were lower than the streets, and the courts around them were sometimes flooded by streams of the dirtiest water flowing in through the gates. It required sometimes several servants, with mattocks and shovels, to keep it dammed back away from the doors. The streets were long canals of liquid mud, dammed up along the sides with drier earth by the shopkeepers between rains. Chinese coolies carried on the work of transporting pedestrians on their backs through and across these barriers, and were forced to dodge the horses and wagons, with which the streets were always full.

It was impossible to escape the flying mud even in the shops. The so-called hotels and lodging-houses were at all times strewn with mud, the approaches and porticoes drenched with rain, the bedding damp, and the table accessories wet. It might have been believed to be the cause of Russian dissipation, for it was sufficient to drive the civil as well as the military to drink.

In the beginning of July, in the height of the wet season, I traveled over the Feng-huang-ch'eng road to the Mo-tien-ling. At three o'clock in the afternoon, when I left the native inn where I lived in the city, it was raining hard. Scattered along the street leading out of the east gate and through the lumber village on the banks of the T'ai-tzü were foot soldiers with wagons and baggage. Some of them were carrying their blanket-rolls and all of them their rifles,

and the water with which they were saturated must have added ten to twenty pounds weight to their burdens. On the banks of the T'ai-tzü the earthworks connecting the city with the hills on the north bank appeared to be dissolving, and were filling up with water. In the plain beyond the defenses, both baggage wagons and artillery sunken to their axle-trees in the mud, were abandoned, with here and there an occasional guard who could be obscurely seen in the downpour. Where the roadway crossed a little rivulet the wagons and caissons were fording the swollen waters and a crowd had gathered here. The rain was pitiless, and the soldiers, down whose faces and from whose clothing the water was running, though chattering with cold, were laughing at their comrades in the stream who were trying to locate a baggage wagon that had entirely disappeared. Some of us had water-proofs, but these were not adequate to keep out the rain.

About six miles from Liao-yang the road entered the hills and for the most part lay in the bed of a swollen stream. The current was swift, and the artillery and wagons were bowling over the rocks. Just as it began to get dark artillery horses that had gotten safely to the end of the day's march were coming back to help out the artillery and wagons that were stalled in the plain.

About seven o'clock I arrived at the quarter etaph at Wang-pao-t'ai. A Russian etaph is—considering the uncertainties of war—a model of convenience. A Russian is by nature and training well suited to play the host, and, unless he be a man of the lower classes, he will have about him a degree of comfort equal to the greatest possibilities of the situation. But in order to fare well at a military etaph one must provide his own food and bedding. Owing to a conspiracy of the military my baggage did not arrive, and I dined from a bottle of gherkins and some bread given me by the commander of the etaph, and tea—which is always

to be had among Russians—and then laid down on the brick kang, with my wet saddle blanket over me, to spend the night.

In the morning my clothing was still wet, but the sky had cleared and the earth was steaming under a bright Manchurian sun. It was July 5th, and the Eastern Detachment, under General Keller, had executed its first offensive battle of the war. A few wounded were met on the road, carried on stretchers and accompanied by guards. The field hospitals had been moved back ten miles toward Liao-yang as if in anticipation of further reverses, and the entire line of communication was in a state of anticipation and excitement. At Liang-chi-shan, the first etaph, thirty miles from Liao-yang, six wounded, including a very pale officer, were carried by in litters. Orders had been received to prepare for a large number of wounded and the commandant of the etaph said he had been notified that he would be expected to assist in the forwarding of at least 4,000 wounded from the battle, that begun on the evening of the 3d, and which was expected to go on. At the same time he complained of having to build walks about the etaph, which, he said, was only preparing for the comfort of the Japanese who would soon arrive!

Liang-chi-shan was in the valley of the T'ang, and the road to the Mo-t'ien-ling ascended a little affluent and passed over the Pass Yang-tzu-ling into the valley of the Lang, on the banks of which was the Village of T'ien-shui-ts'an. General Keller, aroused by the Japanese demonstrations, had undertaken to reconnoiter the Three Pagoda Pass, with the object of ultimately getting to the third etaph at Lien-shan-kuan, where a strong artillery and infantry position with emplacements for a division of artillery, and trenches with wire entanglements, had been occupied by the Eastern Detachment on the twenty-sixth of June and abandoned on the 27th. General Keller's headquarters were at the head of

a little affluent of the T'ang River just inside the Pass Yang-tzu-ling, and the main position was a few miles beyond on the left bank of the Lang—a picturesque site marked by the To-wan Pagoda, from which a magnificent view could be had of the Mo-t'ien-ling group of mountains, rising like a vast tumulus of blue-green jade. The force, which was called the Twenty-first Regiment, advanced on the night of the 3d across the river Lang, past T'ien-shui-tsan and Ho-yen, and having arrived under cover of the fog very near the Japanese outposts, charged with their bayonets. About a third of the regiment succeeded in reaching the Japanese on the slope leading to the pass, but were confused by Japanese counter attacks. The fighting was hot. The movement was unsuccessful, and the whole force, after losing three hundred men, withdrew at dawn to its position inside To-wan, pursued by the Japanese until it reached the protection of its own intrenchments there.

July 6th the rear of General Keller's army presented the appearance of great animation, such as exists at the inauguration of a promising battle. For several miles the roadways were packed with re-enforcements hurrying on to General Keller. They were marching in dense columns. In the fords of the rivers the infantrymen, carrying their boots and trousers on their backs, were in black masses. It looked as though Kouropatkin had been aroused at last to an apprehension of a descent by Kuroki upon Liao-yang, the possibility of which was now a veritable alarm.

## CHAPTER XVI

### REPULSE OF THE EASTERN DETACHMENT AND LOSS OF THE WHOLE NEW COAST OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE

THE Japanese strategy, if such it was, in closing up and occupying the Mo-t'ien-ling range at a time when the Russians were expected to attempt to relieve Port Arthur by land, was successful in two ways, for there was no resistance, and at the same time it attracted the main Russian re-enforcements. It was not until the great position at Mo-t'ien-ling was lost that Kouropatkin diverted the bulk of the Russian re-enforcements to the east, and he then began what proved a frantic and impotent effort to regain what had been given away.

General Oku had been able to move up on the south and prepare for the Battle of Ta-shih-ch'iao when the Eastern Detachment had met its re-enforcements on the western slopes of the Mo-t'ien-ling and was now the full strength of an army corps.

The Eastern Detachment apparently felt the importance of an offensive movement, especially as the whole Grand Army was not yet ready to fall back upon Liao-yang for the final great battle. General Keller formed new plans after the defeat of his Twenty-first Regiment on the 4th, and attacked the Japanese on the seventeenth of July in their position at Mo-t'ien-ling, returning in force the hostility that had been visited upon him.

This was the first Russian offensive battle on the Feng-huang-ch'eng road. Outpost fighting had been reported over the entire half circle from Ta-shih-ch'iao to the T'ai-

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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tzü when it began. Re-enforcements were obtained and a new disposition of forces made to carry out the innovation. The first part of August the newly arrived Seventeenth Corps was sent to An-p'ing, but a part of General Keller's force had also been detached under Herschelman to strengthen the extreme left flank of the Eastern Detachment, which had reported the advance through Ai-yang-men and Sai-ma-chi of a Japanese division. The Seventeenth then fell back in reserve north of the Tai-tzü in the plain and the force under Herschelman became the Tenth Corps. Its position was on the An-p'ing road, which was a direct route to Liao-yang. The Eastern Detachment occupied a ridge of mountains running north and south along the west bank of the Lang. Fifteen miles north of it was the An-p'ing road, which crossed the Lang, and crossing the pass Yu-shu-ling entered the valley of the Shi, a companion river to the Lang here for twelve miles flowing due west. Hershelman's position was at Shi-ho-yen, where an affluent from the south joined the main stream and communicated with the main pass of the Mo-t'ien-ling.

General Keller advanced a strong arm of infantry northward down the valley and across the Lang, where it entered the rugged hills opposite T'ien-shui-tien, and took up a position close to the Japanese right. It had a line of retreat by way of Si-pien-ling—a pass—and by the Lang through Chiu-tsai-yu. By dawn of the 17th, infantry were in position from this advanced point through the rough mountains to T'ien-shui-tsan in front of the To-wan pagoda and to the right of To-wan, where they had already in the night attacked the Japanese.

Long after dawn the Russians continued to strengthen the position taken up by their troops in the night, and they moved up and occupied a long ridge immediately opposite the Mo-t'ien-ling. The lines were very close together, espe-

## *Repulse of the Eastern Detachment*

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cially at the extremities; but within less than two hours the Japanese had occupied the left center of the Russian position, while the Russian infantry, moving to support the line at this place by marching after the traditional fashion—in close formation—were practically annihilated by the Japanese artillery. Fully 300 men were lost before they had reached a position where they could see the enemy, or had taken any part in the fighting. The left flank gave way, and by ten o'clock in the morning the entire Russian frontal attack relaxed. At noon Keller pressed his attack from the direction of Si-pien-ling and Chiu-tsai-yu, and in addition a counter attack to relieve the pressure opposite Mo-t'ien-ling was made on the Japanese right by way of the Shi-ho-yen road leading up the Shi River. The effort began to fail about the middle of the afternoon and the Russian line retired. Those troops which had been in position immediately opposite Mo-t'ien-ling were attacked from the south as they approached T'ien-shui-ts'an en route to To-wan. They believed themselves flanked and lost heavily as they crossed the valley to regain their old position. They took no account of the force of Japanese, who thus attempted to cut them off, and doggedly endured the punishment meted out to them while regaining their old position. They carried off their wounded, making no attempt to displace the Japanese, who it was afterward seen had got to the crest of the hill immediately to the east of Tien-shui-ts'an. The losses in killed and wounded reached more than 1,200 by five o'clock in the afternoon, when firing was no longer to be heard. The Japanese took possession of the battlefield, but did not pursue the Russians, who retired in good order and maintained their outposts a little beyond T'ien-shui-ts'an. The troops that had attacked the Japanese right retired by way of the Si-pien-ling. The retreat continued throughout the night. The scene of the battle was entirely evacuated within twenty-

four hours, and the Japanese were in possession of the battle-field, together with the approaches from the Lanhua and Hsin-kai passes, by which they had distressed the Russian right flank. On the 19th the knapsacks and other accoutrements that were a part of the débris of the battlefield were being gathered up and were to be seen in piles at intervals all along the road from Yang-tzu-ling to the Lang. Farther on, at the village of T'ien-shui-tsang were the bodies of several horses that had been killed by the fire.

The battle, said a Chinese, was begun at six o'clock in the morning "by the Japanese," and at ten o'clock the Russians began to reply, continuing with their artillery until three o'clock in the afternoon. The Japanese, said he, had flanked by way of the "Blue Flower Pass" (Lan-hua-ling) and the "New Road Pass" (Hsin-kai-ling). The place was now under fire from the Japanese outposts, but otherwise the scene was very quiet. To the right and left could be seen the Russian outposts scouting the hillsides. The natives were undisturbed, and a Chinese shopkeeper said that only one Chinese had been wounded in the battle there.

A little lower down the River Lang could be heard the Russian artillery at Chiu-tsai-yu and along the position through Pien-ling to the Shi River on the north where the forces of General Hershelman were suddenly placed on the defensive. General Kuroki, taking advantage of his success of the 17th, had taken the offensive on the An-p'ing road and had inaugurated the battle of Shi-ho-yen. General Keller at the time was sending an infantry brigade with artillery to occupy the new position at Liang-chi-shan and making no attempt to counteract Kuroki's attack on Hershelman.

On the afternoon of the 18th three hundred and fifty wounded en route to Liao-yang were met on the same roadway. Those slightly wounded were being hauled in carts,



Retreat from the Battle of Mo-tien-ling



sometimes thirty to forty carts in a train. At intervals for thirty miles were groups of stretcher-bearers carrying the severely wounded on their shoulders. In some cases native Chinese were employed as relay carriers. They were seen wading the mountain streams and rivers with their burdens, or toiling along in the upland valleys under the hot sun. It was dusty—the feet of the soldiers were parched by the hot dust and there seemed to be miles of transport mingled with them and from which the dust rose in clouds. This road of communication had for days been lined with disabled carts and the dead bodies of animals. Late in the afternoon fully a mile's length of artillery and ammunition wagons were making their way down a little affluent from Yang-tzu-ling to Liang-chi-shan. The Thirty-fourth Regiment passed by, en route to Liang-chi-shan, followed by the Eleventh Siberian Rifles at sundown, while all through the night artillery and baggage rattled through the stony bed of the little affluent of the T'ang leading back of the Yang-tzu-ling.

Some of the company commanders in these regiments were gray-whiskered men long past middle age, making their way sorrowfully with their disheartened troops, for they had just shared in the defeat at Mo-t'ien-ling. As officers of the Eastern Detachment they had often been charged with incompetency, and it had been frequently said that to their lack of knowledge of the country they added a lack of knowledge of the use of military maps. Even colonels on the battlefield had been found unable to give their relative position and that of their troops on the map. And while this force, which had just been defeated, was making its sad withdrawal, Hershelman was timidly fighting another defeat to be added to the list of Russian disasters.

When on the south the Japanese were approaching K'ai-chou at the head of the Liao-tung Gulf, the Russian outposts

on the east under Rennencamp reported bodies of Japanese of the strength of three regiments with eighteen guns in one place, and as much as three battalions with six guns and four squadrons of cavalry in the region of Ai-yang-men on the Sai-ma-chi road. This was General Kuroki's extreme right flank. They reached Shi-ho-yen on the upper Shi River the middle of July, and when General Keller was repulsed promptly attacked the Russian prepared position.

General Hershelman occupied a ridge which directly cut off the Japanese advance. To reach the position which he occupied from Liao-yang, one took the direct road leading through An-p'ing, Ku-chia-tzu and Yu-shu-ling—a pass. The Yu-shu-ling divides the Lang from the Shi River, except that after descending from the Yu-shu-ling one passes through a recess a mile and a half broad ending at a long ridge barring the way and commanding the valley of the Shi River, which flows at its base. Here the road was improved and let the traveler over the ridge into the valley. Continuing eastward, without having to cross the river, one reached an almost identical position ten miles farther on. A ridge about the same height, say an hundred feet, commands the approaches from the east down the little valleys of the headwaters of the Shi. Two small streams unite at this point, flowing around the north end of the ridge.

On the morning of the eighteenth of July the Japanese moved up to General Hershelman's outlying position, and in the afternoon the Russian troops fell back to their main position on the ridge, deploying into the trenches and opening the battle with artillery and rifle fire, which was continued until several hours after dark. At dawn of the 19th the situation was apparently unchanged and remained so during an artillery engagement lasting four hours. But toward the middle of the afternoon the Japanese succeeded in flanking the force on the ridge, arriving on Hershelman's right before

## *Repulse of the Eastern Detachment*

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he could entirely withdraw his force, which consisted of two regiments with artillery. As usual the Russian infantry retired in order, but at about five o'clock the rear-guard remnant, left to stay the Japanese infantry advance, fell into confusion under the Japanese artillery fire and retreated in disorder. While their comrades were re-forming, a half mile in the rear, the Japanese again flanked from the same direction, partly cutting off their retreat. In fighting their way back to their reserves they suffered a loss equal to two-thirds of the day's casualties and retired ten miles to the position in front of Yu-shu-ling during the night.

These military adventures appear to challenge belief, but it seems futile and ungracious to presume to make any military criticisms of them. When one has testified to the chagrin and mortification among intelligent Russian officers and to the dismay of the intelligent soldiers who see their army in flight and their comrades, baggage and accoutrements disappear captive to the enemy, enough of the story has been told for the purpose of human history. But if there is a way by which the military expert may explain these adventures, there is nothing, perhaps, that could prevent his being astonished at the spirit and haste with which the Russian bands, which in the trenches played accompaniments to their rifle attacks, regaled the army in its new position.

The Russians here, as in general, assumed that the Japanese had a superiority in numbers. But it was curious that in their complaints of overwhelming numbers, they ignored the counterbalancing advantage which they always had in their fortifications. When defeated in their positions they complained of superior forces, precisely as when defeated in their attacks upon the enemy's positions.

At Shi-ho-yen the ill-starred Tenth Corps, by falling into a trap, began a long career of misfortune such as was only surpassed throughout the whole war by the adventures of

those earlier units, the Eastern Detachment and the First Siberian Corps.

Keller was still holding his position at Yang-tzu-ling, but the success of Kuroki brought Kouropatkin hurrying from Ta-shih-ch'iao to the scene on the An-p'ing road.

On the twenty-fifth General Kouropatkin, who had visited the Shi River position, forded the Lang here and crossed the stony bed of the river on his return to Ta-shih-ch'iao. He was accompanied by nearly two hundred people, including his Cossack guard, correspondents, various government attachés, and foreign military agents. His cavalcade could not have been more showy had it belonged to the Sultan of Turkey. Having inspected the position he was now hurrying back, for he had no sooner arrived at the Shi River than he was again called south.

Since the battle of Wa-fang-tien the operations on the south had taken a secondary position of importance. The commander-in-chief had desired to fall back uniformly on all sides toward Liao-yang, but Kuroki was interfering with this, and Kouropatkin seemed to apprehend a disaster on the east before he could accomplish it. In the south the fortress artillery had been withdrawn from the mouth of the Liao River, and the First Siberian Corps was in the main defense works, built at Ta-shih-ch'iao. At this point the railway traversed the east edge of the plain that extends one hundred miles to the west. The hills were very close to it on the east, and on the west of the railway was a detached kopje, giving the position something of the appearance of the natural defenses of An-shan-chan.

The Japanese advanced on Saturday, the 23d, and began their artillery fire. In the night the Russians fell back from their outlying positions to the main line of defenses, embracing the detached kopje on the west of the railway. The Russian artillery was engaged throughout the entire line.

## *Repulse of the Eastern Detachment*

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It was strictly an artillery engagement—the most formidable that had yet taken place—and it was evident to the Japanese that the Russians were learning to use their artillery in the fields instead of perching it on the hilltops.

Both sides had greatly re-enforced their artillery since the battle of Wa-fang-tien. As prearranged, General Zarubaieff, who had succeeded General Stackelberg in command, remained wholly on the defense, using his artillery to embarrass the Japanese advance. At nightfall he retreated *en masse*, after having successfully held the whole Russian position. The Japanese took the first line of Russian works on the east in the night and at dawn found the Russians retreating. The retreat to Hai-ch'eng over muddy roads and in the hot sun, was the greatest distress so far, of the campaign, to these troops, and they suffered much from sickness and sunstroke during the day. There were few casualties, and as Ta-shih-ch'iao was the key to Niu-ch'uang, the retreat was severely criticised in the army. General Zarubaieff thought it necessary to make a defense of his action and stated that General Kourapatkin's last instructions to him upon leaving for Ku-chia-tzu were to make sure his retreat. He had, he said, achieved a partial victory, which he would have endangered had he attempted to advance. If he had succeeded in advancing he would have separated more widely the two wings of the army, which was the opposite of what was desired. By retreating he saved his "partial victory" and got away without disaster.

It was disclosed afterward that the Japanese were about to, but had not reached the point of flanking him. A Russian Red Cross physician, who was captured by the Japanese during the progress of the battle, reported that General Oku asked him why the Russians had retreated from Ta-shih-ch'iao. It was evident that the Japanese were considerably surprised, as they had not assaulted the position

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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and were evidently only pressing gently with their infantry for the purpose of holding the Russians. The Russian civil population, as well as the few military at Niu-ch'uang, were no less astonished. Throughout Sunday they could hear the continuous roar and see the smoke of battle eight miles to the east, while the detonations shook their windows. On Monday they were surprised by the arrival of Japanese scouts and the Russian civil administrator fled across the river to Chinese territory. General Kouropatkin had himself superintended much of the work of the defenses and had spent much time at Ta-shih-ch'iao, making journeys into the interior at frequent intervals. After these defenses were made the effect of Kuroki's advance tended to weaken their value, and it was apparent that the various positions north of Ta-shih-ch'iao would be consecutively given up until the army was concentrated in the outlying positions of Liao-yang. General Zarubaieff, who conducted the battle of Ta-shih-ch'iao in Kouropatkin's absence, conducted the rear-guard defensive in all the great retreats throughout the war.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SURRENDER OF THE EASTERN BARRIER

AN-P'ING, twenty miles east of Liao-yang, by Monday, the twenty-fifth of July, when Kouropatkin passed en route to Ta-shih-ch'iao, was an important base of supplies, and beyond it hospitals lined the road to Ku-chia-tzu. Here in a recess, sheltered from the view of the enemy, the road for a mile was lined with artillery parks and bivouacs. In the plain where these forces were gathered, which was fully a mile and a half in diameter, were numbers of bivouacs of infantry reserves. The soup wagons from which the soldiers fed were steaming in the sunlight. The camp had the appearance of preparing for a great battle. There was great activity all about the headquarters, which was located in a little hamlet on the east side of the camp under the hill. This hill ended abruptly on the bank of the Lang River, where was a ford leading to the advance position.

It was now about noon. I forded the Lang, passed through the Village of Ku-chia-tzu immediately on the right bank and continued on east a few miles over the little pass Yu-shu-ling to Kuan-chia-p'u, where was an etaph. General Kouropatkin had spent the night here, although the outposts were but a mile ahead. From his bivouac to the Japanese pickets could not have been more than a mile and three-quarters. It was easily within deadly rifle range of a post of at least eight Japanese pickets, and the fact that the ex-minister of war and commander-in-chief of the Manchurian army had slept there, virtually with the outposts, while General Zarubaeff in the south was evacuating

Ta-shih-ch'iao, seemed incredible until I had proved the proximity of the Japanese outposts by a personal adventure, when I was even more astonished than before.

The etaph was located in a wide recess between two mountain ridges, and the road intersecting it in the middle had the general appearance of the whole line of communication back to An-p'ing and Liao-yang, except that it was a little more quiet.

I crossed this little plain and passed over the ridge beyond, where was a well-used military road, and entered the old bed of the River Shi, leaving the river proper to my left. Half a mile ahead was a Chinese house, and back of it appeared to be men bathing in the river. There was a Chinese in the roadway in front of the house, but otherwise no further signs of man. This fact alone was not strange, but a little further on I passed an abandoned Red Cross cart, which partly aroused my suspicions. I called the Chinese from out his house—for he had disappeared upon my approach—and asked him where the last battle had been fought. He said it was several li farther on. I asked him where the Russian position was, and he said at the ridge from which I had just come! I asked him where the Japanese were, and he said they were in the valley opposite us on the south as well as on the hill just behind his house!

I was riding a white Chinese pony and I realized that I was at the moment the cynosure of the eyes of several hundred Japanese and Russian pickets and scouts in the fields and on the mountain-tops around, and that the Japanese, whose lines I had entered, were only waiting an indication on my part of an attempt to return before they opened fire. But as there was no alternative I put spurs to my horse and wheeled around as quickly as possible. There was the immediate cracking of several rifles, and judging by the sound they could not have been further distant than

## *Surrender of the Eastern Barrier*

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the river bank behind the house. The adventure scared the pony, who threw me out of the saddle and galloped on alone. When I fell on the ground the firing ceased, for I was out of view. I crept into the tall kao-liang, a kind of millet, exactly resembling sorghum, and took out my binocles. But as I could see nothing I returned to the edge of the kao-liang and dashed out across the bare river-bed into the open, with the object of regaining the ridge. As I did so the Japanese pickets immediately began firing again. I could not hear the bullets, but they kept pricking up the dust and gravel in my pathway. There were several men firing, and I was astonished at their inaccuracy, because their rifles sounded as loud as a six-shooter at fifty paces, and they must have been very near. An eighth of a mile beyond I gained the bank of the river bed, where there was a field of tall kao-liang and the firing ceased. I could see from this point that my pony had returned by the military road to the position, where I recovered him from the pickets who told me that they had signaled, warning me of the position of their outposts. I was convinced that General Kouropatkin had spent the night with the outposts merely for effect, and later observation showed that he made a practice of this.

Inside of the ridge was a Cossack post with some artillery a little farther back. I was surprised at the apparent friendliness of the two armies—there was no guard between the etaph and the enemy and I was surprised that hostile men and firearms could have such consideration for one another. I soon had an opportunity to confirm in an extensive way at this same spot these same conclusions.

The middle of the afternoon I returned to Ku-chia-tzu. I stopped at a native inn, which was at the same time the yamen, or office of the local official. He had been reduced to a degree of wretchedness quite below his normal state; even a foreign observer could see that. His secretary enter-

tained me and told me that five Chinese had been ruthlessly killed in the vicinity by the Russian soldiers. He said that the Cossacks especially were bad, but that on the whole, considering the existence of a state of war, there was excellent order. The Chinese in general, it may be said here, were greatly impressed by the foreign art of war, which compared with Chinese standards is humane. The magistrate, whose name was Chou, was an old man and he had little left now but the dusty and rickety old building which had been the inn and into which he had been crowded by the encroachments of the army. His secretary, Mr. Wu, spoke a few words of English, much to my surprise, and I learned that he had at one time studied in the foreign mission at Liao-yang. I began with him a negotiation for eggs, and to give an idea of the degree to which the region was foraged by the soldiers it is only necessary to state that with his official forces, and thoroughly acquainted with the region and its resources, the magistrate was able to accommodate me with only two eggs after the exertions of twenty-four hours.

Adjoining the inn was installed a branch of the Evangelical Hospital, in charge of Dr. Lange, who shortly was the hero of the battle of Ku-chia-tzu. In the evening of the 25th, about one-third of the Thirty-third Regiment was moved up to the position beyond the etaph at Kuan-chia-p'u, and the line strengthened all the way to the Eastern Detachment. These troops of the Ninth Division had only lately arrived from the Eastern Detachment. On Tuesday, the 26th, the Thirty-sixth Regiment, with a sotnia of Cossacks and several troops of mounted infantry, with a mountain battery and a Red Cross contingent, moved up a little affluent of the Lang to Pien-ling, the first pass to the right, before which the Japanese had arrived and were fortifying. I continued under a hot sun—after watching this force occupy its position—

## *Surrender of the Eastern Barrier*

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up the Lang River and arrived at Chiu-tsai-yu shortly after noon. Lieutenant Chininimuriat, who entertained me here, had returned from the position at Si-pien-ling ill. He had received a bullet through his cap and had had a personal encounter with a Japanese officer, from whom he had received a belt and drinking cup as trophies. Though suffering severely from dysentery he had refused to leave his post, for he was proud of having fought with the Eastern Detachment at Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng, where he had had a brother killed, and along the Feng-huang-ch'eng road.

From this outpost of the Eastern Detachment I returned in the evening to the right flank of the Tenth Corps at Pien-ling, where I arrived at about four o'clock. From the top of the pass here the Japanese could be plainly seen with field-glasses along the works something over a mile below. An officer was seen to stand and look at us and then quietly walk along his trenches, which, without the glasses, could be seen defined along the ridges. Our officers said that the Japanese mountain artillery was posted opposite us on the right.

Our column was in command of a general, who, with his staff, rode out into the opening at the top of the pass. Infantry were brought up and deployed on both sides, and after we had freely shown ourselves, and it had been considered that adequate demonstration had been made, the column marched back to the foot of the valley, where it would be in convenient touch with the Kuan-chia-p'u position and bivouac.

As I returned to Ku-chia-tzu a military balloon was sent up back of the pass Yu-shu-ling, where, from the Japanese camp, it was in startling relief against a blazing sunset. The blaze of orange light in the western sky at evening was succeeded by an afterglow of summer moonlight, in which our camp fires blazed up like conflagrations of faggots in autumn fields. I thought of what revelations the military

balloon might be the author in a situation such as this, for the Japanese bivouacs must in the night have been as clearly revealed to the spectators in the carriage of our military balloon as was our own. The Tenth Corps had a long experience with this balloon, but I believe it was the testimony of the military that the appearance of the earth from above had such an unusual look and distances were so deceptive that the information obtained by its use was of little or no practical value and was even confusing and dangerous.

These activities were the harbinger of an early battle. On Thursday morning at ten o'clock I stood on the picket position beyond Kuan-chia-p'u looking down upon the valley where I had been fired on three days before. Twenty-five Cossacks rode out in the direction of the farmhouse, but were fired upon before they reached it and fled in open order. From the top of the ridge the Japanese could be seen on the mountain-tops in the distance. A staff officer came up and questioned the Russian picket, and later a division general arrived with his staff and sat down on the slope facing the enemy. To our left, not much more than one thousand yards away, could be seen the heads and shoulders of four Japanese pickets, who contented themselves with quietly watching us, for it was evident that they were under orders not to fire unless Russian scouts entered their lines. It was surprising that a dozen Russian officers would, in a perfectly casual manner, make themselves the easy target of the enemy, for we were for a period of twenty minutes within deadly range of any Japanese rifleman possessing a degree of marksmanship that might entitle him to be called a sharpshooter. At last an officer discovered the Japanese, who were still calmly lying on the top of the hill inspecting us, but instead of warning his colleagues to retire out of danger, he ordered the picket to begin firing. Much to my surprise the Japanese pickets not only disappeared from view, but refused to return our

fire. If they had done this, they might have killed and disabled half a dozen officers.

Our front presented a perpendicular wall to the enemy a hundred feet high. Leading to the right the ground ascended to a height of three hundred or four hundred feet, and on the east was a sheer descent. Behind was a steep slope up which a company of infantry labored to make their way. About the middle of the afternoon a battery took up a position on our left on the bench of the ridge just out of view of the Japanese pickets.

Later in the day several of our infantry scouts made a detour from Pien-ling on the south into the edge of the Shi River valley, entering the Japanese line and escaping into our position. One man in particular could be seen coming down a little water course, where he drew the fire of the Japanese pickets, and continuing into the valley, passed through a village in which Japanese were concealed and then turned into a roadway leading in our direction. He waved his hand to the enemy as they continued to fire upon him, and at one place he sat down at the side of the road, where he rested for a couple of minutes, when he got up and continued his stroll until he disappeared in the kao-liang leading to our position, when the firing ceased. His exploit is a fair example of Russian bravery, which often reaches the stage of a magnificent contempt for and indifference to danger, to the extent sometimes of indiscretion and foolhardiness.

The military balloon was brought up to Yu-shu-ling, where its use must have excited the speculation and suspicion of the Japanese. The spectacle of the military bantering the Japanese sharpshooters on the 28th on the outposts and the music and singing in the bivouacs was in telling contrast to the spectacle presented at Ku-chia-tzu on the evening of the 31st.

Then instead of an army in relaxation along the position and around its camp fires, was a defeated army that had

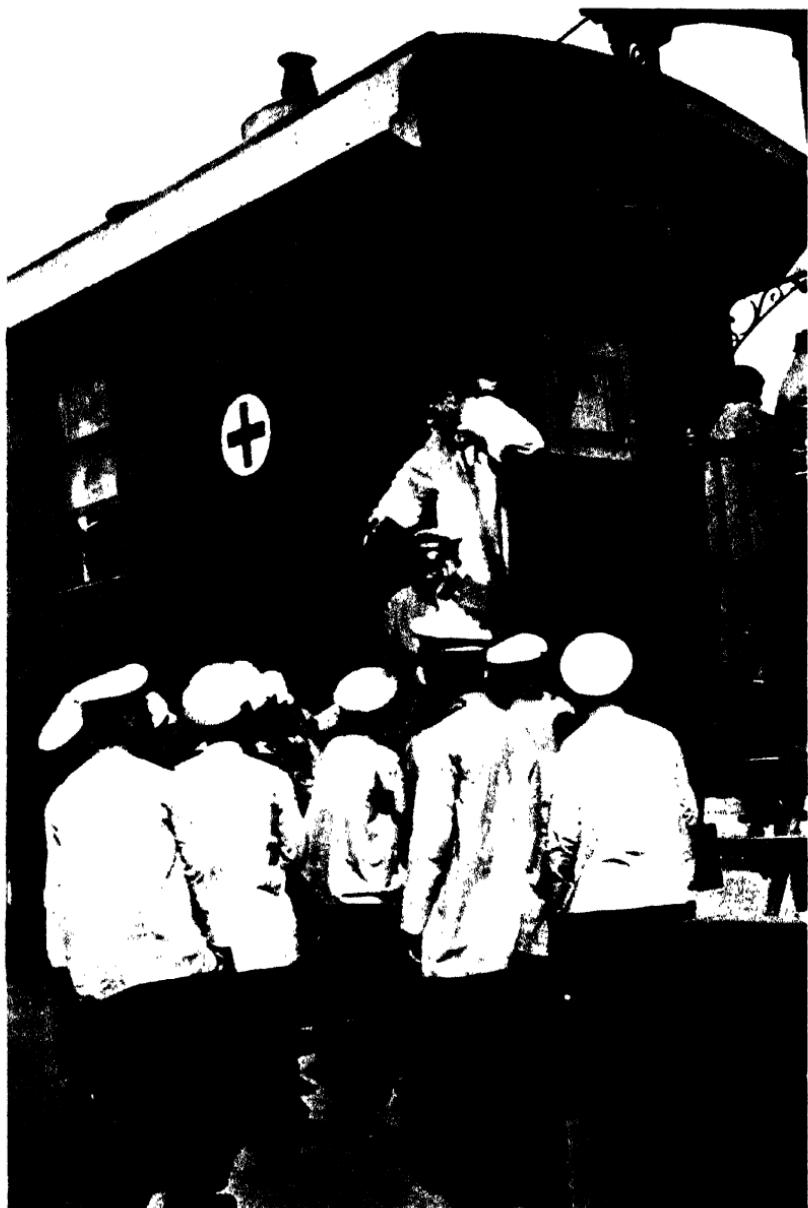
## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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already taken up where it had left off the long retreat from the Yalu. Instead of singing—silence and soberness. The bands, even, were not playing, and the troops were grave and morose.

As had so many times been the case in the operations on the east, the Russian forces had allowed the Japanese to move up close to them and fortify. They had then, as usual, reached a state of anxiety regarding the Japanese strength and demonstration, and had undertaken to turn them out. On the night of the 29th they had driven away the Japanese outposts on the hill opposite the ridge where their main position was. There was a rifle engagement during the day and on the night of the 30th the Tamboff Regiment was advanced across the Shi River in front of the main position. This movement was apprehended by the Japanese, who had fallen back before it, and they promptly attacked on their right, taking the pickets guarding the Russian left and reaching the coping of the hill overlooking the bivouac of the Tamboff Regiment. At dawn, when the Japanese infantry had reached this position, they were ready to pour an accurate fire into the Tamboff Regiment at close range. Officers of the regiment were warned at dawn that they were within range of the Japanese artillery, but instead of moving away, they ordered morning tea! When the Japanese infantry opened fire on the morning of the 31st, they were able to select their targets from the officers who were engaged in the performance of various details of their morning toilet. Officers were still combing their hair and drinking their tea when the Japanese artillery opened upon them and shrapnel was discharged into their tents. Nineteen of these officers were killed!

It was this regiment which, with the Penza Regiment at Gorny Bougarovo in December, 1877, according to General Gourko, gave the Turks several well-directed volleys, leapt



Wounded Russian soldiers telling the story of the "terrible enemy" to comrades



## *Surrender of the Eastern Barrier*

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from their works and threw themselves with the bayonet upon the enemy, who were seized with a panic in the presence of the enormous number of killed and wounded which they had lost in a few seconds. The regiment did not do so much in the advance above Ku-chia-tzu on the thirty-first of July. History deteriorated. The men of the twentieth century were fighting on a lower plane of tactics than those in the nineteenth.

This regiment was hid from the main Japanese force, which had entrenched itself in the valley on the opposite side of the hill. A counter attack was made on the Japanese right, but they had made good their position commanding the Russian camp. The battle degenerated, as had all the battles of this army, into defense and then into an effort of the force to extricate itself, which it did by the close of day, and in the night of the 31st an attempt was made to retire behind the pass Yu-shu-ling.

At dawn of August 1st the Russian artillery was hidden in the kao-liang on the east bank of the Lang, and from their position north of the Ku-chia-tzu road, were directed against the pass Pien-ling, where the Japanese had turned the Russian right flank and crushed nearly a brigade. Here a road led for perhaps a couple of miles between high hills in a very narrow valley, for the most part in a stony bed of a little water course, and was walled in by stone barriers built to retain the soil of the little fields and terraces on each side. In no place was it wider than was necessary for two Chinese carts to pass, and the troops that had advanced by it to Pien-ling had wended their way along two and three abreast and in some places in single file. The infantry trenches at Pien-ling were so shallow that the infantrymen could not escape from them without being seen from the Japanese trenches a mile away. When they were turned out of this trench on the morning of the 31st they poured back into the little

roadway, stampeding re-enforcements which they met. They were attacked in the beginning of their flight, leaving nearly half a company on the field, and farther down in the most treacherous part of the line of retreat were surprised by another large Japanese force posted on the steep mountain on the south. The stone walls at the roadside were one to three feet in height, affording no shelter to the escaping soldiers caught in a deadly fire at point-blank range of, in some places, only three or four hundred yards. Nearly a battalion was left dead or wounded on the field in the roadway. So complete was the slaughter that General Hershelman asked a truce, which was granted by the Japanese, in order to bring off his wounded. It was these unfortunates that had been met with in the An-p'ing road in the middle of the afternoon. At 8:15 in the morning of the first I left Ku-chia-tzu and passed up the road to the east, but seeing a battery concealed in the grain there I made a little detour to the left and watched the opening of the artillery battle. The mountain artillery could be heard at Li-p'i-yu, about three miles up the Lang to the south, holding back the Japanese troops that had destroyed our troops from Pien-ling and desultory rifle fire had been heard all morning. At 8:45 two or three Japanese shrapnel burst immediately over the battery I have just mentioned, and within twenty minutes it had shifted its position to the west bank of the Lang, a mile and a half away, and began firing into Pien-ling and into the valley beyond Yu-shu-ling. The Japanese artillery was at the same time shelling with shrapnel the pass Yu-shu-ling, which was now the main Russian left position. The Village of Ku-chia-tzu, now just behind the center of our position, had been turned from a line north and south to a line northeast-southwest. The right was broken and the left flank was drawn in to support the center.

In the Chinese inn here Dr. Lange had stored a part of

## *Surrender of the Eastern Barrier*

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his hospital supplies, from which he hastily took a quantity of emergency appurtenances, and started for the etaph at Kuan-chia-p'u, which was under rifle fire. Up to this time there had been more than one thousand casualties immediately in front of his field station. He invited officers to take whatever stores they might, "because," said he, "they must be abandoned. I have not yet been able to move my wounded and we shall doubtless be taken by the Japanese." He moved up the road, passed through the Japanese shrapnel at the Yu-shu-ling and was able before noon to remove his wounded to the rear.

But the Russian line was rapidly falling back. From the rocky spur of the ridge that ended abruptly just behind Ku-chia-tzu on the opposite side of the Lang could be seen the two lines of infantry, Russian and Japanese, in contact down the Lang valley from Li-p'i-yu on the south, to the Yu-shu-ling. The Japanese infantry were coming down the ravines from the high mountains around Pien-ling, and their bullets were pricking up the dust along the Russian trenches at the edge of the village. The Russian infantry was systematically falling back. The infantry just in front and not more than five hundred yards distant, arose slowly and without any apparent attempt to take shelter from the Japanese fire, retired in a dogged, preoccupied fashion and rendezvoused just behind the ridge upon which I stood. At the foot of the ridge passed a young Caucasian Cossack, who was carrying an armful of those ornate Caucasian sabers, which both the civilians and the military of that nation wear. A little later I saw two or three of the same sotnia, each leading two to four riderless horses, and four others being carried off the field in ambulances. This was the relic of a Caucasian sotnia.

At nine o'clock the Russian artillery was on the west bank of the Lang, five minutes later the Russian infantry had

followed it. At 10 A.M. the Japanese were breaking shrapnel over the Yu-shu-ling which they at once occupied, and at 10:30 it was entirely quiet, and not even rifle firing could be heard. At 11:15 one of the Russian batteries back of Ku-chia-tzu began to shell Yu-shu-ling to embarrass the Japanese occupation there. At 11:55 a Japanese *brisant* struck in the An-p'ing road half a mile west of Ku-chia-tzu, and at three o'clock in the afternoon General Hershelman, with the headquarters of the Tenth Corps, moved back toward An-p'ing. The main position of the Tenth Corps was now on the west bank of the Lang.

When night was falling on the 31st the line of wounded in litters and wagons and in carts that filed through Ku-chia-tzu reached almost to An-p'ing. There had been "more than a thousand" casualties during the day. When it grew quite dark the drivers were unable to keep the road, which was rough and at the sides strewn with bowlders. As the wheels fell over these obstacles the discomfited soldiers groaned and spectators crept about among the wheels and between the legs of the horses to roll the stones away. The Chinese discreetly closed their shops and barricaded their houses when the battle came.

But the battle of Ku-chia-tzu was not Kuroki's main action on these dates. It was a simultaneous attack with Kuroki's attack on Keller at Yang-tzu-ling.

Kuroki's force, since it had reached the approaches of the Feng-shui range of mountains, had been divided into two columns, and its advance by the An-p'ing and by the Feng-huang-ch'eng roads had been uniform. When the Russians displaced the Japanese picket in front of their main position on the Shi on the 29th, Kuroki moved against the Eastern Detachment at Yang-tzu-ling and the Eastern Detachment sustained there the most severe attack delivered by Kuroki against it since it came under Keller's command.

The failure of all attempts to interfere with Kuroki's advance and the success of his forward movements against the Tenth Corps on the An-p'ing road, and against the Eastern Detachment on the Mo-t'ien-ling road, had made the east the most important part of the theater of war. Kuroki, on the morning of July 31st, simultaneous with the attack of his forces upon the Tenth Corps, deployed a great artillery fire along the Yang-tzu-ling position, which lasted throughout the day. The front was greatly extended since the battle of Mo-t'ien-ling, so that the battle line on that day, including the position on the An-p'ing road, extended for fully twenty miles.

Keller resisted Kuroki's attempt to turn his right flank, where his position was very strong, and might have held his front at the To-wan Pagoda, but by two o'clock in the afternoon he was dead, from almost the whole contents of a shrapnel shell discharged into his body. As at other battles since he had taken command, General Keller was present on the position. He was, like members of his staff, dressed in a white tunic. As the field tactics exposed the Russians to heavy losses among their infantry, so the military dress, especially among the Russian officers, made them a target for the Japanese artillery. By night the left flank was exposed by the loss of Pien-ling, a pass on the north, and of the position of the To-wan Pagoda, the detachment therefore having lost as many men as the Tenth Corps, as well as four guns, and its chief, General Keller, being dead, retreated in disorder, the main body retiring fifteen miles to the prepared position just inside Liang-chi-shan.

The troops of the entire east front lost about two thousand one hundred (2,100) men. The Eastern Detachment was only morally beaten and the Japanese probably owe their victory at Yang-tzu-ling to the death of the brave General Keller. But as I have pointed out, criticism had long been

futile. The incredible had become so obvious and so astonishing that men only wondered.

The Eastern Detachment became the Third Siberian Corps, under General Ivanoff, when it had fallen back to the prepared position at Liang-chi-shan on the south.

The First, Second and Fourth Corps had assembled as if to defend Hai-ch'eng, and the action by which the position there was evacuated was simultaneous with the fighting at Yang-tzu-ling and Yu-shu-ling.

Every part of the army had now been pretty badly "dusted," except the Seventeenth Corps, which had only arrived. It was said that the Russians were getting the severe lesson in modern warfare that the American general, Slocum, once warned them of. The Fourth Corps, which was now under General Sassulitch, who had been given this command after the disciplinary disgrace put upon him after Ch'iu-lien-ch'eng, did a good deal of fighting as it fell back from Si-mu-ch'ang into Hai-ch'eng, losing five guns on the way. When Hai-ch'eng was abandoned a regiment was accused of having been stampeded in the night by four hilarious Japanese horsemen riding into it with a war-whoop. It was asserted that guns of a battery took a position on the side of a hill actually occupied by the Japanese and when they rushed back with the gun limbers to the rear, the Japanese solemnly walked over and took the guns!

The Japanese allowed the Russians to take all their stores and transport from Hai-ch'eng without molestation, and the Russian army of the south disappeared quietly into the position at An-shan-chan accompanied by a cloud of dust. Including the battle of Ta-shih-ch'iao, the army of the south, which had been directly under Kouropatkin's supervision and numbered fully 80,000 men, had lost about five thousand men killed and wounded.

The eastern mountain barrier protecting the army base

## *Surrender of the Eastern Barrier*

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was now in the hands of the enemy, who occupied the western slopes leading to the coming battle-ground and to the plain, with no formidable obstacle to bar its advance except the redoubts before the city walls. This barrier had neither been economically defended nor dearly lost. On four battle-grounds, Shi-ho-yen, Yu-shu-ling or Kuan-chia-p'u, Pien-ling and T'a-k'ou-ling or Mo-t'ien-ling the Russian forces had been trapped and slaughtered and their adventures at the eastern barrier had only brought further discredit upon the "plan of war," which was now ridiculed in every capital in the world.

### **ВЫСОЧАЙШАЯ ТЕЛЕГРАММА**

**Его Императорского Величества Государя Императора**

*Командующему Маньчжурской Армии Генерал-Адъютанту Куропаткину отъ 31 пол.*

"Господь даровалъ Ея Величеству и Миръ Сына АЛЕКСІЯ. Сыну сообщить вамъ объ этой милости Божией России и Намъ, чтобы раздѣлить радость доблестныхъ войскъ дѣйствующей Армии. Назначаю Новорожденнаго Наслѣдника Цесаревича Шефомъ 12-го Восточно-Сибирскаго стрѣлковаго полка".

**Николай.**

The Emperor's telegram to the Grand Army announcing the birth of his son Alexia, and the appointment of the infant to be Colonel-in-Chief of the Twelfth East Siberian Regiment (see page 180).

## CHAPTER XVIII

### LIAO-YANG, THE RELIANCE OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE

THE month of August found the Grand Army in the outlying positions of the great stronghold and military base of Liao-yang, and ushered in those great events which are more important, doubtless, than any events that have ever affected this ancient city. The armies had not yet wholly concentrated, particularly on the south. But the country was a network of communications, and especially in the immediate vicinity of Liao-yang the relatively trackless millet fields were furrowed wide and far with military roads now choking with dust.

Eastward from the T'ai-tzü railway bridge and crossing under the northeast corner of the city wall, a railway embankment and levee had been built extending to the eastern hills. It was intended to protect the defenses in front of the city on the south from inundation by the T'ai-tzü River and to support a railway to the left flank by way of An-p'ing. The tall millet had begun to be broken down to make firing zones in front of the trenches, and this extended for four miles from the city walls and was continuous, except in such places as it was desired to have cover to screen the artillery and troops.

The An-p'ing and the Feng-huang-ch'eng roads, which followed the same course for several miles east of Liao-yang, changed their aspect from day to day by the miscellaneous traffic and no traffic, like chameleons. August was the month of calms in so far as nature was concerned, and man and beast sweltered in the kao-liang where it seemed there was

not a breath of air for days at a time. In consequence, movements of men were to an extent carried on in the night, although the antiquated tactics of the army did not encourage them to sacrifice sleep and rest for the benefits which night marches would give in the preparation and carrying out of battles.

On account of the great heat and dust I undertook to reach An-p'ing by night, with a solitary companion. I was not provided with an escort, but relied upon taking a bridle-path just outside of the east suburbs of the city to keep clear of any troops that might be bivouacking on the main road. It was after eight o'clock and quite dark when we encountered the sentries of a baggage contingent that had moved in since I had passed that way. They arrested us and led us to the midst of the camp, where we were surrounded by what in the night looked to be an awe-struck herd of wild animals, a figure which may serve well to describe what were in fact astonished Siberian rustics. Among these peasants, whom it would have been thought would have been obedient to the discipline of the quiet camp, there were generally some ready to plunder and rob. While we were in charge of the officers some soldiers succeeded in looting the saddle-bags on one of the horses and a lieutenant proudly relieved my companion of his revolver. A little later he politely returned the weapon with a profound bow, but the articles stolen from the saddle-bags were not recovered. It took a quarter of an hour to complete our identification, and at the end of that time we were released and a guide given us to point out the Liao-yang road. No attempt was made to recover the stolen articles. We continued our course by the main road until nine o'clock, when we stopped in a hamlet to rest for the night.

We hammered for some time at the doors of an inn in a quiet hamlet away from the road and were at last admitted

to the solitary enclosure. It was a brilliant moonlight night, and the dogs that had been baying at the moon now turned upon us, although they must long ago have been accustomed to strange visitors, for, in fact, the place showed the effects of many visitations of the soldiers. But there was yet straw for the horses, and in the great kitchen, which in such places occupies a whole building on one side of the compound, there was plenty of fresh water with which to bathe, and in a few minutes we had aroused the sleepy Chinese cook who made us some tea. We slept in the main building on beds of fragrant straw exposed to the moonlight and the zephyrs of the summer night, for the window lattices were gone and the building was almost completely dismantled by the soldiers. What depredations were beneath their ingenuity, the tenants had themselves executed, such as removing all the loose wood and taking the iron of the oven and hiding it. At a little later period in the war the depredations of the soldiers left nothing possible even to the lowest order of predatory Chinese. They not only burned up all the wood in the buildings, but after they had done so they carried off the kettles in which they had cooked their food, and which constituted the whole cooking machinery of the Chinese family.

At dawn we continued our journey, following up the course of the T'ang River. Preparations were being made to extend a pontoon bridge over this stream at the point where it meets the T'ai-tzü, although this was done merely as an emergency because that stream is fordable at all times, except in great floods. The An-p'ing road was not only a line of communication for the Tenth Corps resting at Ku-chia-tzu, but a good deal of traffic of the Eastern Detachment (now the Third Siberian Corps, under General Ivanoff), now that the dry season had come on, took this route to avoid the Wang-pao-t'ai pass on the main Liao-yang-Feng-huang-ch'eng road. An-p'ing was turned into an army base,

and large quantities of stores, principally grain, were being piled up at the entrance to the town. A long line of Chinese carts bearing these stores reached for miles along the roadway, and after we had crossed the T'ang I noticed the nearly endless line of carts in charge of two or three mounted soldiers come to a halt and the Chinese carters, who were themselves a small army, began to gather the growing grain adjoining the roadway, with which they fed their animals. In some places the crops that were yet only half ripe had been cut off for several hundred yards from the roadway, and the farmers said that they had often made claims for damages which were never received from the military. In general the testimony of the natives coincided with this, although immediately around the City of Liao-yang a certain fixed rate was paid to the farmers to compensate them for the wholesale destruction of crops that was necessary to the scheme of fortification.

At An-p'ing there was an interesting community of sutlers representing all the petty nationalities of Southern Europe and Western Asia. They were a decided feature of the Grand Army. They contributed to the important army bases, such as Mukden and Liao-yang, an element that gave those places the business and bustle of a great fair. At An-p'ing they displayed preserves, tobacco, wines and liquors. Among the latter was nearly every known label, though as they were generally known to come from the China coast by way of Niu-ch'uang or Hsin-min-t'un, they were justly under deep suspicion. There were restaurants as well, under canopies of Chinese rush mats, which conveniences were to be had in great quantity in Manchuria and were one of the chief blessings of the campaigner.

An-p'ing proper did not contain over one hundred and fifty native families, but it had two or three substantial compounds with good buildings, and these were occupied by the

military and Red Cross. The military life of the highway was so strenuous and contentious, now that it was at all times crowded with troops and transports, that there were practically no accommodations. The house-fly has never been found in any place in the world, I believe, to be a greater pest than in Manchuria, and owing to the filth immediately surrounding the living places of the Chinese, the houses were largely abandoned and became the depositories of the filth of the camps. Officers and men drank freely from the native wells, which were seldom pure, and slept for the most part in the open. At this season this style of life was for the most part ideal, but it was with difficulty that one could find shelter from the burning sun by day and there was no time, even at night, when one could escape the flies.

At noon we ascended the hillside just beyond An-p'ing and rested during the heat of the day under the scrub oaks and chestnuts and proceeded later in the afternoon to the Tenth Corps on the Lang. The little native hamlets, since the battle of Yu-shu-ling, were nearly completely dismantled and appropriated to the uses of the military and the conveniences of the common soldier. The natives were subsisting upon the relics of their crops and in some cases it is good to state, upon the generosity of the troops, who were, at any rate, at intervals visited by plenty. The line to Ku-chia-tzu furnished a fair illustration of a half dozen lines of communication and supply radiating from Liao-yang, representing an aspect of the struggles of the Eastern Empire and of the travail of two great races in their progress. The Chinese were receiving such an object lesson of the things that exist in the world as seemed sufficient to make them wish to abandon any further struggle with the conditions which they found about them. But in this extremity they seemed to prove throughout the war their complete ability to weld their lives to the life of the army and even

in the rigors of the battlefield, to improve their existence. On the actual line of communications the natives usually sent their families away, often a hundred miles to the interior, but for the most part they remained to endure the completest depredations by the soldiers. The lines of communication were natural highways and intersected the principal towns and traversed the richest farmsteads. It may be seen, therefore, that the operations ending in the battle of Liao-yang laid waste a considerable part of the agricultural region. At this time the crops were still growing rankly, but the valleys were fairly drubbed by the marching troops and the fine grain beaten into the earth.

Returning from Ku-chia-tzu we rode late into the evening, repassed An-p'ing at dusk and proceeded to a village considerably to the right of the road and in touch with the rough country leading off toward Pen-shi-hu. The moon had not come up and we had to make our way through the darkness across a very wide and rocky river bed and to ford the river. When we reached the village the inhabitants were asleep and the gates were barred, and it was on a high bank up which we had to spur our horses. It was one of those villages which was so far from the main highway that it was virtually unmolested, and for this reason it seemed well to go there, as it gave the best promises for rest and food. The night-watch, after due parley, unbarred the great wooden gates with which the village had been newly fitted with the hope of excluding the soldiers, and we were admitted into the village and into the compound of a merchant. We passed here a comfortable night in a building that had been used as a granary. Just before lying down for the night, and while we were eating "chou"—a thick gruel of millet and rice brought us by the Chinese—our host explained that hostile "hung-hu-tzüs" had come down to a point but a little way in the hills. His information, derived through native

sources, which were a part of the system of communications that is always a subject of wonder to foreigners in Manchuria and which often baffled the Russian military, suggested that the Japanese, through their Chinese recruits, had already, more than three weeks before the battle of Liao-yang proper began, scouted the whole region between the An-p'ing road and the T'ai-tzü River, which was the place where Kuroki was to make his dash for the Russian rear. I remembered this incident at the Chinese village on the bank of the T'ang, afterward, and decided that such was the case.

The Feng-huang-ch'eng road, the next great line of communication on the south, was an even busier scene by reason of the works carried on by the engineers to improve the road. At the entrance to the hills about seven miles from Liao-yang was the Village of Kao-li-ch'un; three miles farther on Wang-pao-t'ai, where was the quarter-etapeh. Leaving this place the road led over the two passes which took the name of the Village of Wang-pao-t'ai. At the highest of these passes the native road was discarded as impossible and abandoned to foot soldiers. An expensive roadway had been cut from the rock along which, with only the greatest difficulty, could artillery be hauled. With eight horses to a field gun it was still necessary, with long ropes, to hitch at least fifty men to a gun in order to get it up to the summit. Under the hot sun and shut in by the surrounding hills without a breath of air, I witnessed a whole brigade of artillery sweltering throughout an entire day in this difficult place. While but one gun could be brought up at a time, the road was so dangerous going down on the opposite side that it required even more time in the descent. A new road had to be blasted out of the rock so that wagon-trains might move in both directions at the same time.

Owing to the rains of July the roads crossing the depres-

sions between and beyond these passes had to be battened for considerable distances with willow mattresses. The road was now heated and dusty, animated with traffic and stinking with dead animals lying in the sun, which no one had the time to bury. Where it entered the valley of the T'ang a picturesque rocky spur rose from the water's edge in front of the beholder, and here was an ideal place for a plunge, but so many soldiers were encamped along the opposite bank and for ten miles along the upper waters, that the water was already milky from the soap used in bathing. Strange enough it became more and more dirty as one ascended to Liang-chi-shan.

When I had first visited this road, the troops were drenched with rain, shivering from cold one instant and convulsed with laughter the next. Men who ought to have been in the hospital twenty-four hours before were at that time struggling in the flooded river or laughing at the comical mishap of a comrade, or from the bank jeering some fellow-unfortunate whose baggage had disappeared in the current. But now those who were not cooling their naked bodies in the dirty tide were fanning themselves under their shelter tents or in the shade of the willows and aspens about the villages. The soldiers in reserve along these roads climbed to nearly any height on the surrounding hillsides to reach the shelter of a few saplings in whose little shadow they could recline and cook their pot of tea. Everywhere the houses were broken, the roads dirty, and the limpid streams and crystal fords of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road cloudy with camp sewage. There was no forage left at the positions, and it was impossible to feed a horse without a contribution of millet and bean cake from the military. There was scarcely more than a wisp of any green thing left in the vicinity of the position. Far up in a ravine I found a hamlet wherein to pass the night, but there was only one house in which

one could find shelter—although there was a transport contingent a few hundred yards away—and this was crowded with several decrepit members of a Chinese family. From the men of the transport I secured one feed of grain and bean cake for my horse.

As I returned a part of the Third Corps was maneuvering on the main position just inside Liang-chi-shan. Artillery was to be seen high up on the mountain-side, and back of the position which was on hills that left only a narrow gap for the passage of the T'ang River, infantry were deployed in open order entirely across the valley. In the wide and rocky river bed I saw a maneuver quite unlike anything that I had yet seen. A thin extended line was rushing up the valley, suggesting that they anticipated the future necessity of capturing their main position from the enemy. But I did not see them employ the modern infantry tactics of making short rushes in squads. On all the distant hilltops the Russian observing stations and outposts were plainly visible. Among the green vegetation of the higher gullies could be seen thin lines of smoke from little camp-fires, and up the valleys the blue smoke of the soup wagons. The Third Corps, which at this point faced Kuroki's center, was distributed on hills from three to eight hundred feet high, from which could be seen the nest of mountains at Mo-t'ien-ling whence it had so lately come. The Tenth Corps in the An-p'ing-Ku-chia-tzu road was deployed on mountains of about the same magnitude. On the extreme left of the Russian position, at Pen-shi-hu, was one infantry regiment and a cavalry detachment commanded by General Rennen-camp, whose business it was to guard the flank if not to threaten the Japanese rear. Kuroki's left flank, where he kept from the beginning the Imperial Guards which he advanced had by way of Hsu-yen northward, was opposite Kao-feng-shih, four miles to the right of the Feng-huang-

ch'eng road. These guards were watched by the Third Corps and by a regiment of cavalry under General Greikoff, which was a part of General Mischenko's mixed cavalry, artillery, and infantry division that filled the opening between the troops of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road and three army corps, whose operations on the railway were minutely supervised by General Kouropatkin himself. The position at Kao-feng-shih was on the west bank of a stream that flowed into the T'ang from the south. The Japanese to approach the position came down from mountains much more lofty than those which sheltered the right flank of the Third Corps, and approached among foothills and through gullies a cultivated plain more than a mile wide. The Russian position at this point guarded one of the main roads to Liao-yang from the south. The mountains grew smaller as they approached the plain of the Liao and ended in the small hills at An-shan-chan and Hai-ch'eng.

The Russians were waiting for the Japanese to push up on the south. Since the middle of July they had become very anxious about the east, where they had suffered so many reverses within a short time that they would not have been greatly surprised, many of them, to have awakened one morning to find Kuroki on the crests of the hills overlooking the city. The assembled Russian armies had now fallen so far back as to come into close contact with each other. The army base was accessible and officers of every column were enabled to freely discuss all the details of the campaign with each other. In the International Hotel in Liao-yang, in the garden at the pagoda, and in the restaurant at the station, they exchanged stories of defeat and first learned that the events of the campaign were not simply a history of falling back before the enemy in order to reach a more favorable position.

With the evacuation of Ta-shih-ch'iao the battles for the

possession of southern Manchuria ended. On the Hsu-yen-Hai-ch'eng road the Japanese Imperial Guard had been replaced by troops of the army of Nodzu, and General Mischenko, at the battle of Ta-shih-ch'iao, had fallen back to Si-mu-ch'ang on the Hai-ch'eng road, merely annoying the enemy's advance with his artillery in obedience to the orders issued by General Kouropatkin for the entire conduct of the battle of Ta-shih-ch'iao. A week later he fell back from Si-mu-ch'ang in the same manner, retiring under screen of his artillery. The defense of the strong works about Hai-ch'eng was much less formidable than the defense of Ta-shih-ch'iao and those works were evacuated virtually without battle after the Japanese had taken the outlying positions. General Kouropatkin retired from here with such promptness that General Oku, who was in command of the Japanese army on the railway notified the native magistrate that they would not occupy the native city, and they moved straight on toward An-shan-chan.

In July the Russian Emperor announced the birth of a son, Alexia, and his appointment as colonel-in-chief of the Twelfth East Siberian Rifle Regiment, which was the regiment that had distinguished itself at Ch-iu-lien-ch'eng. The event was announced in an extra special, printed by the official newspaper—the *Manchurian Army Viestnik*. Notwithstanding a shade of gloom in the army, there was an amount of celebration and even merrymaking, especially among the men of the Twelfth Regiment and their friends in honor of this event. It was surprising to a stranger the amount of Russian good-fellowship and spontaneity, and the flimsiest excuse by which it can be provoked, and especially surprising is the quantities of liquids consumed. Up to this time, although the troops had been continually beaten, the army seemed outwardly, at least to the casual observer, as care-free as possible. In the back court in the International

Hotel captains, colonels and generals could be found any day, and occasionally from late morning breakfast to late at night, repeatedly greeting each other with kisses through their heavy beards and making merry over liquor, champagne and beer. It reminded one of Port Arthur just before the opening of the war. Every night had its orgy, and out of these grew many troubles for the commander-in-chief. It seemed to be a natural characteristic to begin breakfast with champagne. A young officer who had not the wherewithal to meet the bill, gave a large dinner and afterward established himself in the dining court at the International Hotel to carry on a continual carouse with visitors. He would begin in the morning on a bottle of liquor, and at night was always certain of being carried out to his room by the Chinese waiters. It took a fortnight by military process to transfer him from the army base to the rear. A staff officer and three companions, who mixed their champagne with beer and vodka, and among them could not raise fifty rubles with which to pay their bill, would monopolize the hotel.

The officers were not all incontinent or indifferent. There were plenty of them with opinions and an appreciation of the great events about to take place. When the Japanese had now closed up around all our outlying positions, one officer declared solemnly that Japan was now playing a very dangerous game. In the restaurant in the railway station one of Mischenko's officers related his experiences with the new shimose powder which was in use by the Japanese. He had had his first encounter with it at the Big Pass below Si-mu-ch'ang, where he said the Japanese fired it from naval guns. It had left the effect of dizziness, with which he was at intervals afflicted. He took with him to the rear, to which he was bound, a wholesome respect for the Japanese fighting man. Another, who was a serious man, and had humbly taken to heart the lessons of the campaign, lessons which so

many of his superiors had despised, said that it would not be strange if out of Japan should come a great military leader who should be as far in advance of his time as was Genghis Khan. He spoke of the enterprise and courage and power of the Japanese and the surprise which they had given the army.

With a subtle divination that seems to belong to men who have no friend but heaven, it became known that the Port Arthur fleet was attempting to escape, and serious men gave up the hope of Port Arthur's holding out. It was generally admitted the latter part of July that it would fall soon, and every day awaited its expected doom. The Viceroy Alexeieff abandoned Mukden for Vladivostok, where he intended to receive any portion of the fleet which might arrive there. The army at no time claimed that any of these vessels would reach that haven, for they had come to scoff at every declaration and device of the navy, and they were right, because only the most sinister prophecies came true. Many did, however, assume that the fortress of Port Arthur had accomplished what was originally expected of it, and that was, to hold out until the Russian army was concentrated in force in the defenses at Liao-yang. It was widely believed that the Japanese army had reached the limit of its numerical strength, and it was reported throughout the position that the Japanese recruits were wholly young boys. It is interesting to know that there was a wide belief that the supply of Japanese recruits was all but exhausted and that financial difficulties would soon begin in Japan which would compel her to sue for peace. It was even believed that Russia could buy innumerable war vessels to replace her lost fleet, just as after the battle of Mukden it was quite widely believed in the Russian army that Rodjestvensky could bring his fleet through the Arctic Ocean and that the Czar could purchase at his convenience the Chilean, the Argentinean, or some other

neutral fleet. If this had been the irresponsible talk only of the ignorant it could be dismissed without notice, but these possibilities were discussed in Russian-Manchurian newspapers, and the navies which the Czar was to shortly purchase were illustrated in their principal journals and discussed throughout the Eastern Empire. The hopes of many Russians were yet, generally speaking, truly magnificent and their credulity was only matched by their hitherto disdainful disparagement of the enemy.

On August 10th the whole fleet at Port Arthur escaped and started for the high seas. It was apprehended by the Japanese fleet and dispersed, part of it returning and taking refuge in Port Arthur harbor, but the principal vessels, including the *Czarevitch*, *Askold*, *Diana* and others were damaged and fled south, taking refuge from their pursuers in the neutral harbors of Chefoo, Tsing-tao and Shanghai, where they were interned to wait the end of the war. The general staff at Liao-yang took every precaution to prevent this news of the practical destruction of the Port Arthur fleet from becoming known in the army. The official reports were so arranged that it required thirteen days to make known the fact that a sea fight had occurred near the coast of Korea, and the army was only beginning to realize that there had been another disaster when the battle of Liao-yang came on. The news quickly spread among the officers and augmented the feeling of depression which was one of the effects of their continuous reverses, so that when on August 24th the Japanese, inspired anew by the effects of Togo's success, moved against the Liao-yang position, the Russian army, in addition to having been beaten back a hundred and fifty miles from the sea and to having sustained a nearly complete moral defeat, carried into the contest now forced upon them the weight of another disaster. Port Arthur was believed by them to be lost. On the very eve of battle the infirmities

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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of the army were canvassed. One heard charges that officers at An-shan-chan and elsewhere on the new position were generally drinking and unfit for duty, and that *demi-mondaine* could be seen riding a la cavalier around the works and even going up to the firing line. In the center, where the battle was to open, artillery was still placed on the tops of the hills.

On the eve of the repulses and losses that made the situation so hopeless, the indefinable gloom was expressed in strange and uncanny noises. First there were the street gamins singing rude but musical imitations of Russian marching songs, giving at the end the "hip," "hip," with which the soldiers greeted their officers. At the breaches in the city walls, where the slick tough mud was more than uncommonly deep, stragglers labored breathless and fatigued—a pathetic sight—sinking under their monstrous equipment. Swiss musical boxes could be heard from beyond the moat, where men of a musical turn were singing from some opera. It rained irresolutely and the day was gray and regretful, such as reminds one of the mistakes of life, of the vanities of politics and of ambition.

The air was full of rumors. The Liao River was now a line of communication for the Japanese, whose scouts were reported by the Hussars to have arrived at the bend of the T'ai-tzü, fifteen miles west of Liao-yang. Japanese cavalry had appeared on the railway as far north as Tieh-ling. There were repeated rumors of the approach of the Japanese to Mukden from the southeast. The size of the Japanese army was greatly exaggerated and Liao-yang, the army base, was intermittently agitated by the fear that it was about to be besieged.

## CHAPTER XIX

### PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG

**A**BOUT August 10, 1904, General Kharkevitch, the quartermaster general, went around the outposts at An-shan-chan, and receiving their reports, he remarked gravely, "Yes, it is certain, the Japanese have all gone to Port Arthur." As a rule Russian officers at this time unhesitatingly affirmed that the Japanese were at Port Arthur.

The middle of August the Japanese caused the railroad to be damaged by an explosion between Liao-yang and Mukden, and these alarms were immediately followed by an exit of foreign women and children and some civilians, including the bank staff, who retired to Mukden. A number of hospitals followed. After the fighting of the last of July, the Japanese had fallen away on the east and also on the south, but by the third week in August they had closed up on the east and were reported to be marching upon Mukden. A force reached Pen-shi-hu and occupied the south bank of the T'ai-tzü, opposite the Russian position there and kept up a demonstration.

The battle of Liao-yang, for which Kouropatkin had for four months prepared, was now about to begin. In the words of the Czar's strategists at St. Petersburg and at Liao-yang, the Japanese had now come to that point in the interior which had been selected with this end in view, and "where could be followed up a crushing defeat to the bitter end, with blow after blow sealing the fate of the campaign."

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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The army itself interpreted this to mean making peace in Tokyo and this was now the boast of the Imperial party. This element was already beginning to be ridiculed by a large element of the army that had discovered the object of the war and were disposed to resent the invasion of Manchuria and the participation in a quarrel brought on by political conspirators. They realized that a long series of defeats was a sorry preparation for this great victory which they were about to win and about which they had heard so much. Every general who had attacked the Japanese had been defeated, and every general who had been attacked by the Japanese had lost his position. Sassulitch, Stoessel, Stackelberg, Zarubaieff, Keller, Hershelman, and others, had met defeat in one form or another.

The main position of the Russian army when the battle began extended from Ku-chia-tzü through Kung-ch'ang-ling and Liang-chi-shan to Kao-feng-shih, and thence to An-shan-chan on the railway. The Japanese closed up on the southeast and east, and when they began to shell the Russian positions the explosion of their shrapnel, more than twenty miles away, could be distinctly seen from the walls of Liao-yang and the guns could be faintly heard. A signal station was established on the northwest corner of the city wall, where the operators attracted curious attention from the natives. A heliograph was constantly flashing signals from the top of Shou-shan, a solitary hill rising over four hundred feet above the plain two and a half miles south of the railway station. General Oku was the last to close up on the south and to begin the greatest and most terrible battle he had yet fought, for no defense on the south equaled the efforts of Stackelberg at Wa-fang-tien (Te-li-ssü) until Shou-shan was reached. Stackelberg was again in command and held his position for a short time at An-shan-chan. Kuroki, by his advance through the Mo-t'ien-ling, had relieved Oku of



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General Orloff (autograph). He was entrusted by Kouropatkin with the task of crushing the head of Kuroki's column at the battle of Liao-yang, but was carried



## *Preliminary Account of the Battle of Liao-Yang*

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serious fighting between Wa-fang-tien and Liao-yang, and he was the first now to close up against the Russian position. Kuroki's Imperial Guards reconnoitered before Kao-feng-shih on the twenty-fourth of August and advanced upon the Russian lines, driving in the Russian outposts, and on the twenty-fifth engaged the Third Siberian Corps of General Ivanoff in a great artillery engagement lasting two days. The Japanese employed their captured Russian guns and projectiles.

As heretofore, they placed their captured guns immediately into service, disclosing the disquieting fact that the Russian gunners did not take out the breach-blocks of their guns when giving them up, as was generally claimed. The attack was carried out with such determination as to alarm the Russian center. Notwithstanding the wide valley which the Japanese had to cross at this place, their infantry advanced and attacked Ivanoff's right. Though their losses were apparently very large they succeeded in reaching a position under the Russian fortified hills.

The position of the Russians was a strong one. Their batteries were well situated, and some at least remained hidden. The cannonade, beginning at 5:30 in the morning, was accompanied by rifle fire extending for three miles along the front of the Third Corps. The Japanese, while pushing their infantry attack, concentrated their artillery fire, and in several instances located with accuracy the advanced Russian batteries. The attempt at this point by the Japanese to break the Russian center was so vigorous that both infantry and artillery re-enforcements were moved up the valley of this affluent of the T'ang to support the line there. The infantry moved up very cautiously about eight o'clock in the morning and the artillery hid itself as best it could in the kao-liang of the river bottom, where it was difficult to move about on account of the recent rains.

On the 25th Ivanoff was also being attacked at Liang-chi-shan, and from the center the cannonading could be heard at An-shan-chan. The Tenth Corps on the east had been engaged, and on the 26th a battle was fought along the whole outlying Liao-yang position. In the night General Kouropatkin, although not at all beaten, issued orders to retire to the next line of defense. The Tenth Corps retired to the An-p'ing position; the Third Corps to the passes of Wang-pao-t'ai; and, abandoning the magnificent fortifications at An-shan-chan, with hardly a shot, except from two or three batteries of artillery to check the advancing columns of Oku, Stackelberg hurried away over roads like rivers, losing sixteen guns, which could not be pulled out of the mud. The breaking of harness and the succumbing of caissons and animals in the sloughs made it a dismal retreat.

Stackelberg, then, after three hundred casualties, fell back from An-shan-chan. The continued cannonading brought on heavy rains and the streams threatened to become impassable. On the 27th, the Japanese having moved up, there was a small skirmish in front of the Third Corps, which on the 28th took a position farther in, south-southeast of Liao-yang on the Meng-chia-fang road, where there was no prepared position in the way of trenches, and the corps worked all night in the smooth ground digging defenses and preparing for the great part which it was to play in the battle of the 29th and 30th. All the afternoon of the day it arrived it struggled through the rocky hamlets and up the hillsides where there were no roads.

The Tenth Corps, defending the An-p'ing road, now sustained the main attack on the east, and though supported by the Seventeenth European Army Corps, which had moved from its position north of the T'ai-tzü, where it was in reserve, to An-p'ing, it was defeated and driven into the Liao-yang plain, leaving the region open for the subsequent

## *Preliminary Account of the Battle of Liao-Yang*

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dash made by General Kuroki to the Yen-t'ai mines for the purpose of cutting off the Russian retreat. The Third Corps, fighting the battle of the Meng-chia-fang road, behaved splendidly under the generalship of Ivanoff, who was able with his artillery placed about the Village of Chao-fan-t'un to prevent the entrance of the Japanese by the Meng-chia-fang road.

The artillery of the Third Corps, after its long training in the battles of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road, was probably the most skillful in the army. Ivanoff was well acquainted with this branch of the military, and at the beginning of the battle of the 29th he maneuvered the bulk of his guns to his right flank, with which he withstood the assault by Nodzu's army, and was able to protect Stackelberg's east flank from the heavy charges by Oku. General Stackelberg, commanding the south, had taken up his position on Shou-shan and was watching the development of Oku's grand frontal assault.

By the 26th the sounds of battle could be detected coming from all parts of the line, and the natives of Liao-yang, who were undemonstrative and orderly, began to close their shops and to steal out into the streets. Outside the compound in which I lived there was a great mound of débris from an ancient extinct pottery. It was higher than the city walls and very large, and upon its crest a crowd of native spectators had gathered and could see from their vantage a great panorama of bursting shrapnel fifty miles in length. For the most part native trade and shopping in the streets was undisturbed. Cartridge boxes were in general use among the Chinese as utensils, and the only alteration in the economy of native business was the concealment by the shopkeepers of Russian goods, for they were expecting the Japanese.

After three days, ending the twenty-sixth of August, the Russians had retired to the inner Liao-yang position. The long lines of wounded came out of the kao-liang fields and

reached the city walls. In the night of the 26th, when the retreating corps encamped in the Liao-yang plain, the deserted streets, now silent as the catacombs, were threaded by lines of stretcher-bearers, guided by a few lanterns and carrying some of the dead and wounded from An-p'ing. It was a solemn and impressive sight. The stream of dead and wounded that was to overflow every street and roadway had already reached the army base.

Each day's cannonade brought on a fall of rain and the roadways were kept sticky and the filth in the city streets converted into muck. Through this the victims of the battle-field were carried, and in traversing the main thoroughfare they passed in one place, in the first days, a street chapel where the exhortations of a foreign evangelist were mingled with the ribald noises of traffic. At a point opposite the International Hotel was a den of opium smokers where several horrible figures were at all times lying in a pale and death-like stupor on the k'ang, so near to the thoroughfare that the heels of the galloping Cossack ponies strewed them with mud. Such it might be said was China while the wolves were fighting for her carcass. The Chinese children pursued passing Russian officers, singing the songs of the *café's chantant* and begging for money.

On the last four days the battle ending with August 31st centered in the south road between the hills at Chao-fan-t'un and Shou-shan, where Oku made a most desperate and persistent assault in order to hold the Russian army in its position until Kuroki could reach the rear. General Ivanoff made daily use of his balloon, which was so close that it attracted the Japanese fire. General Stackelberg remained in person upon Shou-shan until driven away from his point of observation by the most vicious artillery fire. Word came from General Kondradovitch, one of his division commanders, that he could no longer hold his position!—that unless reserves

The Manchurians watching Kuropatkin's defeat at Liao-yang



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The Manchurians watching Kuropatkin's defeat at Liaoyang



## *Preliminary Account of the Battle of Liao-Yang*

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came he would have to fall back. Stackelberg sent back word that he *must* hold his position. And he did, but it was with a loss of about twenty-five per cent. of his division.

At one o'clock in the morning of September 1st, Kuroki was found to be moving toward the Russian rear in the direction toward Yen-t'ai. General Kouropatkin, who had already begun withdrawing from the position south of Liao-yang, hastened the troops northward. The Third Corps—General Ivanoff—began to retire on August 31st, and in the night of the 31st General Stackelberg abandoned Shou-shan—it was said because the Japanese had crept up and succeeded in cutting through and breaking his wire entanglements. Kuroki, after driving in the Tenth and Seventeenth corps from the An-p'ing road, awaited his opportunity and crossed the T'ai-tzü at the big bend about twelve miles from Liao-yang. Kouropatkin, though he gave up the hills on the south, held the intrenchments in front of the walls of Liao-yang and at the same time arrested Kuroki's movement at the end of a three-days' fight, in which the Seventeenth and part of the Fifth corps played the principal rôle.

On the night of the 3d Liao-yang was given up, and while holding Kuroki in the hills east of Yen-t'ai, Kouropatkin placed General Zarubaieff in command of the rear-guard with forty-four decimated battalions and withdrew the Grand Army in the direction of Mukden, retiring more than thirty miles from the scene of battle.

Stackelberg passed up the railway and crossed the T'ai-tzü where there were two stationary bridges besides pontoons to facilitate his retreat. The Third and Tenth corps crossed by the pontoons and the fords at the northeast corner of the city. The Third rested a day north of Liao-yang, suffering at night from the bursting of shrapnel in their bivouacs and having their balloon shot at, and was north

of Yen-t'ai by September 2d in reserve behind Kouropatkin's forces.

The Tenth Corps had lost one battery and perhaps one thousand killed and wounded when on August 26th the Seventeenth Corps—General Bilderling—crossed the T'ai-tzü from his position on the north bank opposite the gap between Nodzu and Kuroki to support it. The bluffs where he had his position conformed to the line of hills of the inner Liao-yang position. An eyewitness reports the events that followed.

When the fighting force of the Seventeenth, under General Yanzhul, approached An-p'ing it saw the Japanese shrapnel breaking and things were going so badly that it was ordered to fall back and deploy in the hills on the right, for it was thought that Kuroki was going to try and force the An-p'ing road. The Seventeenth Corps bivouacked the night of the twenty-sixth of August in the hills on the T'ang River, north of the An-p'ing road, and on the 27th was prepared again to move. It was drizzling rain—caused by the cannonade—and after a few hours orders were received to move back, and the corps began recrossing the T'ai-tzü by its pontoons. To cover the retirement, the hills on the north of the An-p'ing road, which it had just left, were swept with shrapnel by its own guns and the infantry kept up a rifle fire through and across the kao-liang between the rear-guard and the hills to keep the rear clear of the enemy.

The Seventeenth reoccupied its old position on the bluff near Ssü-t'un-tzü. Kuroki kept continually throwing out small bodies of troops in all the roadways toward the T'ang River and the An-p'ing road to distract the attention of the Russians from his intended movement and until he knew that his plan was known to Kouropatkin. His strategy was successful, for it was fully believed that he was coming down the T'ang River, until one o'clock in the morning of Sep-

tember 1st, when Count Romanoff, of the Fifty-second Dragoons, reported him crossing the T'ai-tzü to the north near the Village of Kuan-t'un at a spot marked by an old Chinese fort on a high bluff guarding the highway. Kuroki was now entirely independent of the Japanese main body and had cut himself off. The information was at once sent to Kourapatkin.

The Japanese began fording and then threw pontoons across opposite the bluff. The place was well chosen. It was out of range of any Russian batteries and the crossing of all of Kuroki's force was practically uninterrupted. The force estimated to have crossed on September 1st was one division, and the crossing continued on the 2d and on the 3d without molestation by the Russians. It was completed on the 4th.

Having crossed with his first division, Kuroki advanced his infantry against the Village of Si-fan-t'un and established his batteries on a low ridge of hills near Kuan-t'un. His infantry now continued in the direction of Yen-t'ai. Kourapatkin dispatched the Fifty-fourth Division of the Fifth Corps under General Orloff to engage and crush the head of Kuroki's advance column. From a hill near Si-fan-t'un Kuroki's army could be distinctly seen moving stolidly and grandly across the T'ai-tzü. At the same time Orloff was approaching the hills back of Si-fan-t'un and the two armies came together on the 2d. There was an engagement all along the line for about eight miles. The Russians grouped their guns in large batteries of thirty-two pieces and fired northeast or east rather recklessly, breaking shrapnel along the crests of the hills where the advancing Japanese might try to entrench. The Japanese replied feebly and contented themselves on the evening of the 2d with shelling a hill that was the observatory of several generals.

Kuroki's first bodies were over the T'ai-tzü by the close

of the 2d, though his rear was not over until the 4th. On the 2d he practically won his success. By the middle of the afternoon General Orloff was carried from the field of Si-fan-t'un wounded, and had failed to crush the front of Kuroki's column because, as he said, of his raw troops. He was removed from the command. Kuroki's advance was arrested on the 3d, but it was not seen that his strength was already spent. The observation hill at Si-fan-t'un near Yen-t'ai mines was hotly contested and the fighting was as terrible as some of the fighting in the south road at Liao-yang. The Japanese took the hill in the evening and the Russians, unable to retake it, fell back.

On the 3d, at eight o'clock in the morning, a battery on the south was firing across the T'ai-tzü at a village where Japanese were supposed to be, but otherwise it was quiet there. The Japanese replied badly, their shrapnel sometimes bursting high in the air.

The news of the retreat from Liao-yang now reached the Seventeenth Corps, which was ordered to retire; the Japanese still approaching very strong and persistent. The Seventeenth moved toward Yen-t'ai. Its Third Division formed its rear-guard. The Fourth Corps, under General Zarubaieff, with other troops formed the rear-guard for the whole army, and the retreat was covered on the right flank by the First Siberian Corps of Stackelberg marching up along the railway. The rear-guard position extended from Su-ch'en on the east to the railway bridge over the T'ai-tzü. All other bridges were destroyed. The retreat of the Grand Army was unmolested, the Japanese being unable on account of exhaustion to pursue.

The Russians greatly overestimated Kuroki's force, placing it at three divisions instead of two. Kouropatkin had approximately twice as many troops as Kuroki with which to crush the head of Kuroki's column and smash his rear.





His plan was to do this, and should have succeeded according to the advantages which he possessed. When he began to cross the T'ai-tzü it was thought in the Russian army that the intrepid and invincible Kuroki had now made a fatal error. The Russians watched him cutting himself off by three to eight miles from the rest of the army, and thought he was walking into a trap. But Kouropatkin's generals seemed to work so badly that no headway against the Japanese line was gained until the 3d, when, although the Japanese batteries fell back and fired at extreme range and disclosed a moral decline in their attack, they could not be located by the Russian artillerists and the Russian infantry could not advance.

Stackelberg came in for the blame for failure to crush Kuroki. The Seventeenth and Fifth corps troops and others that participated in the battle east of Yen-t'ai blamed him for retiring from Shou-shan, which movement permitted the Japanese army to re-enforce Kuroki. Had this not happened, said they, Kuroki's position would have been perilous, notwithstanding Orloff's failure. So ended the official and military battle of Liao-yang, in animosity and recrimination, like every other battle and engagement since the opening gun on the Port Arthur promontory.

## CHAPTER XX

### SURRENDER OF THE ARMY BASE

THE Japanese struck the Russian center at Kao-feng-shih on August 25th, twenty miles from Liao-yang, and it was the operations of the 25th and 26th along the entire south and east line that landed the Russians at the inner positions of their stronghold and base at Liao-yang. Circling around by the great Feng-huang-ch'eng road, I entered the Village of Kao-feng-shih. The road there was spattered with blood. Shrapnel was bursting over the house where I took tiffin with a Chinese family anxious to see a stranger not a Russian. The Chinese cheerfully remained in their homes—a Chinese has no place but home. In the street I accosted a blind man who was wandering about with a staff. He said he was "sore afraid" and "knew not what affairs were making." I told him it was war, and of no use to fear, all would soon be over and he should go back and remain in his house, where he would be safe. Greatly comforted, he thanked me and went confidently back. As I turned around two soldiers were making the hand-saddle, which they are taught to use in aiding the wounded, and were carefully lifting up a man who was wounded in the leg.

The heavy Russian batteries above the roofs of the town sometimes thundered in volleys, sometimes singly, but always a great cloud of dust and smoke went up when the guns recoiled in the dry shale and parched soil of the breast-works—the same permanent works soiled and arid as the now braised, embattled khaki roundabouts of the insidious

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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enemy—the same works which, once discovered by the Japanese artillerymen, remained a stationary target for hours, days, or until wasted under the slow measured fire from the enemy's guns. And now with mechanical precision the Japanese shells fell like trip-hammers upon these batteries, beneath a half dozen of which I passed. Fragments of shrapnel and other missiles went coursing and swishing through the kao-liang, clipping the leaves and tassels, and through the pines above me. At the head of the gully the horses of the mountain artillery were standing in the hot sun in the open in front of some Chinese huts. There was a band resting under the overhanging bank to escape the shrapnel which was falling around. The regiment was the Twelfth Siberian, of which the young Czarevitch was the colonel-in-chief. This was the famous band that with a priest had charged at the head of the regiment at the Yalu River. These men had always been defeated. This band had never played an advance that was not a bitter rout. And yet, with the rest of the regiment around the crest of the ridge above, they sat loyally awaiting their inevitable discomfiture and were stoically and consecutively burying their dead in the loam a little farther below.

I stopped a moment to talk with Captain Netchvolodoff and then mounted to the infantry trenches, littered with empty cartridges and inhabited by brave, generous, happy-go-lucky soldiers. An officer took me out on the skyline and naïvely told me that the Japanese "were right there at the foot of the incline," perhaps three-quarters of a mile away! I remonstrated with him for exposing his position where twenty-five men could have been killed by a single shot had the enemy chosen to put us in target. He thought nothing of that—men are by instinct brave. On the right a company of men sat under a shower of deadly shrapnel quietly on the steep mountainside, while out of their midst a slow, con-

tinuous trail of wounded, lacerated men worked its way and seemed to trickle down the little water-course to the rear. The tentacles of death were fastened there. But the men calmly lighted their cigarettes while the Conqueror walked among them! As I left the path a captain told me of the progress of the battle and said: "Until now victory is with us!" How often had I heard that thing! It was one of the tragedies and was in accord with the remark of another officer: "We always defeat the Japanese, but afterward we retreat, why, I do not know!"

Five minutes later, as I left the gully, a shell burst just behind me and a man was buried there under the waving kao-liang. The enemy was shelling the Russian approaches. Shells continued to drop in the roadway. In a crevice at the side a small hospital squad had finished dressing forty-nine wounded. I was now on the right flank and came upon a division of cavalry under General Greikoff, who, with his staff, was resting under a tree in a village. They were anxious to know the last word from the battle-ground, with what intense interest their faces plainly showed. I repeated what I had been told a couple of miles back, well knowing that they knew the truth. Wounded men in litters now took up most of the road. In one place I was stopped for a Japanese and my hair examined to prove or disprove my identity.

It began to rain, and as the downpour increased the sounds of battle seemed to die away. I crossed a pass and descended into a little valley leading to An-shan-chan. It grew wider and as the rain increased became flooded, so that for several miles my horse waded through deep water and mud. I could now hear the guns of An-shan-chan, which I was approaching, and met soldiers bringing off their wounded in litters who inquired the way to the rear. When opposite Zarubaieff's left flank I turned north, arriving in the Liao-yang plain by the great south road. As I crossed

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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the firing zone in front of the trenches back of Shou-shan, I noticed that the field works there were under guard. Sentries warned me to avoid the glacis in front of the trenches, where mines and fugases had been planted, and I saw that the inner position was being occupied. The retreat to the inner position came that night. The Japanese began their last bound, and by the time I filed my dispatches at the telegraph office the Russians made that last "retirement," which brought both to what had been looked upon by the world as a final battle-ground.

The place where the battle was fought lay under the eyes of the spectator as he stood upon the city walls, and if on horseback he might have traversed it in the saddle, as I did every day for six days, over an arc of fifteen miles. To me the battle of Liao-yang began with the debouching of the Tenth Corps into the Liao-yang plain from the An-p'ing road. It was a scene which no witness can forget. This army, always beaten, had fought a retreat of three days from Kung-ch'ang-ling and An-p'ing passes, where it was attacked simultaneously with the attack on the army at Kao-feng-shih. The Japanese watched it pass out of the hills at Hsiao-t'un with throbbing hearts.

The Eastern Army also—that of the luckless and unhappy Keller—had fought itself back to the plain through the great Feng-huang-ch'eng road. But the spectacle, the embodied augury, was perched like a raven upon the banners of the Tenth. Suddenly I came upon the immutable, the ever present line—that of the wounded—struggling downcast, threading itself through the transport—that sanguinary miscellany of the field and of martial vagrancy! Among the crowd passing at the moment was a Greek follower whom I had helped to a recovery from dysentery, and I hailed him in a way not to attract attention.

"Where have you been?"

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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“Great battley,” he replied. “Have had great battley—me have fear, have fear speak Anglis!”

This speech conveyed little more than the state of feeling with which Americans and English were regarded, especially at the moment. Debouching like a great flood just unconfined, the army spread fanlike upon the already saddened and sodden plain. One nucleus alone arrested and held my attention. Armsful of kao-liang were being carried back and flung into a steep-banked, deep, muddy and treacherous water-course. On the further bank, pouring around both sides of and through a village, came the Red Cross cart, the soup wagon, the ammunition limber and piece, the tarantass, the transport wagon, precipitating themselves at two places into the silo, and plunging like mad through mud, water and raw ensilage. From the bank momentary orders from a general, anxious faces, cries of “Brava!” from a whipped but willing soldiery, and there a crowd of nurses aghast at the scene and troubled for their wounded moaning in the tumbrels. Next a burial party interring a line of dead on the banks of the T'ai-tzü, and in the rear a great field of baggage wagons blocked, their wagoners turning hurtling looks backward where the rear-guard could be seen scarcely a mile away taking its position on the last friendly hill!

At this point, the day following, I rode out to see the position—the last hill was gone! Rosoff, of the Tenth, hailed me and asked if I was not afraid. He had nearly been killed by his own people on the outpost position a few days before. We were standing at the rear-guard battery, which fired a few shots and hurriedly left its position in the kao-liang while we were talking. Going out past the guard, we discovered the Japanese scouts on the hill facing and withdrew.

It was the 29th! There had been battling all the time. But now the awestruck native, cowering on the ancient city

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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walls to which he was by custom forbidden, saw with his own eyes the burst of shell. The storm had gathered and it began to break. The skies and earth seemed to exude battle. I turned to the southeast to the Meng-chia-fang road, where the day's work was to be done, and passed the mouth of the great Feng-huang-ch'eng road. Here, too, a file of carts of the blood-red cross, tumbling over the stones, led by a sister who was not thinking of the Volga—the moaning was too loud for that! There was the sound of guns at Wang-pao-t'ai, just up the gorge, and orderlies going up and down. An officer hailed me, but before I could answer a Cossack rushed by—"See, see! the Cossack! He has the *gold* cross! *le croix d'or!* It was at Chiu-lien-ch'eng"—and both were off!

Chiu-lien-ch'eng! Kin-chou! Wa-feng-kao! Mo-t'ien-ling! Shi River! Ta-shih-ch'iao! Kao-feng-shih! An-p'ing! and now—Liao-yang! Legions of crosses, but can they make one victory? Two hundred crosses of the Order of St. George given to Mischenko's men before the battle of Kao-feng-shih, but will they save Liao-yang?

The next road was ours. It wound through the kao-liang and as it approached Chiao-fan-t'un it became a little gorge where in the crevices on this side and that the doctors were working. The immutable file was there; the lost bandage, the heavy litter, and the blood-marked trail. This was the village beyond whose stone-built cottages the artillery horses waited out the days and the nights while the guns did their work on the hills above. They slept like soldiers in their harness, and through the long hours they stood on guard. A shell dropped into a house crowded with native women and children who had sought refuge there; few escaped. But no matter, they are Chinese! The Russian censor only laughed when he read it in my dispatch. They are Chinese!

As I left the position and went back down the little valley,

the Third Corps had come out of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road and was swinging around to the south to the Meng-chia-fang road and centering at Shi-chang-yu and Chiao-fan-t'un. The staff was inquiring for the camps, the officers were inquiring for the staff and the staff again was inquiring for troops. There were three peaks above the village that were under hot Japanese fire, and the rifles were going. The hospital corps in the sunken road had had a hundred and forty-nine wounded. The dead were still on the ridges or in the enemy's lines. From Shi-chang-yu and Ta-shih the Russian guns were throwing shells into the Meng-chia-fang road toward evening. Passing up the slope to the west toward Ta-shih, I came directly under the shells chasing each other through the upper air. The Japanese infantry had been closing up in the valley of the south road, and the Sixth Siberian Brigade, falling back, flowed past me and filed over the foothills. The tired officers spoke pleasantly and interestedly to me as they came up with their men, and moved behind the three peaks to receive the enemy if he attempted to rush the position at night, which it was nearly certain he would do. All day Stackelberg had stood under fire on and around Shou-shan, a solitary high hill overlooking and commanding the city. The military balloon was in the sky behind Ta-shih batteries, and as I passed it was being hauled down, and I arrived in time to see the officers, who had been sitting at a table apparently engaged in a very strenuous enterprise, get up and go to meet the aeronauts, carrying their notebooks as they went. As the sun went down the cannonade ceased and rifle-fire went merrily and consistently on, extending along the west to beyond the railway.

The city, which up to this moment had not been without its military prodigals, was deserted of the military idler and the uniformed voluptuary. At the last breakfast in the foreign hotel before it closed but one officer, a young lieutenant,



Escape of the Xth Corps from Kuroki's pursuit in the An'ping road



## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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was there *en passant*, to ask me with great anxiety if they had been able to hold their position during the past night.

August 30th the guns began along the whole southeast and south at dawn, and the long, steady roll, which was the proof of many guns, proclaimed that it was to be a great day—or a mean one. A Russian correspondent, overhearing the substance of this remark made to the waiter—it was a day when all classes were one—namely, that there was a great battle, accepted the familiar tone for the open sesame and assured me without apology that I had spoken the truth, and added that it was very possible the Japanese would be in Liao-yang before nightfall!

The tension could not be mistaken, yet all was quiet. There was no danger of the battle getting away from us now, and all prepared deliberately for terrible things just ahead. Two more Russian correspondents came in and sat down with the young lieutenant. One of them was afterward shot through the breast! The first correspondent, with his field-glasses on the table before him, went on writing a dispatch, but what he was telling his people who can say? Leaving nothing undone of our usual habits, we ordered breakfast, which we ate leisurely and fully to the unbroken roll of the guns, and then repaired to our several habitations to arrange for the disposition of our baggage.

At 9:00 A.M., having refurnished my saddle-bags and holsters, I went into the street. Crowds of Chinese were on the house-tops and eminences watching the distant battle. Order throughout. Clear, bright sunlight.

10:00.—Staff and other military tenants leaving settlement with all baggage. Foreign attachés taken under escort to railway bridge north of the city.

10:30.—Hailed from top of west gate of city by camp-follower of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road, who shouts down at me gleefully, "Heh you do? You go see big battley,

hey?" "You come back here? Good-by." These vagrants of the market-place, these waifs of the bloody trail! by what devious ways they move. And yet apparently there is a Providence caring for them, for they flourish alike in crowded city and lonely field.

10:45.—All fences about settlement removed to allow free passage of military wagons and troops. Servants neglected are cooking over fires built against the houses, sending great black stains up the brickwork. Red Cross hospital, which yesterday pre-empted the little "square" opposite the station, contests with the helter-skelter and the mud a few feet of space at the gate wherein to receive and tend its wounded.

11:00.—Arrive at Shou-shan, where battle is centering. Shrapnel now bursting over the north end and over the inside of this hill. Stopped for a Japanese and examined by the soldiers. Roadway full of officers and ammunition wagons. Engineers leveling Chinese graves in all directions and cutting down trees, destroying all cover in glacis before rifle defenses. Every one gazes. Engineers and reserve officers waiting in kao-liang, hail all who will stop and inquire the fortune of the hour. Contingents concealed here and there. Cloudy. Drizzling. Battle jamming and thumping like a steam pump. Japanese working along railway, their infantry advancing by uncovered trenches.

11:30.—Arrived at artillery outposts on South road. Japanese shelling plain ahead where artillery guards concealed. Shells striking close to Red Cross camp. Shot going "clip," "clip," through wet kao-liang. Russians succeed in silencing one Japanese battery, having found the range from their balloon. Japanese increase most destructive fire.

3:00 P.M.—Staff officers say losses yesterday were three thousand, but that to-day the casualties will be double those of yesterday.

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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3:30.—Arrive under shrapnel fire, where Japanese have the range of a Russian battery in front of Ivanoff's headquarters near Ta-shih. In rear meet an officer speaking a little French, who informs me, "We have on east the Mr. Kuroki. We have here the Mr. Nodzu. Here the Mr. Oku! *On dit pour le moment nous avons la victoire!*" The Russian is a large-hearted and very likeable man. Rifle firing in front of Meng-chia-fang. Wounded lugged through kao-liang along wet roads are let down to rest in mud and puddles where the water trickles slowly through the canvas litters.

4:00.—Japanese cease cannon firing on Shou-shan and vicinity. Battle continues in Meng-chia-fang road. Japs maintaining vigor of attack against the Russian center, no doubt for purpose of holding the enemy until they can strike its rear. Reserves lounge in little camps along the banks of the sunken road, awaiting orders.

7:00.—Cannonading at Chiao-fan-t'un stops.

August 31st.—Attacks and rushes by the Japanese throughout the night.

9:45 A.M.—Japanese shelling north end of Shou-shan. Occasional shell-bursts along south and southeast horizon. Guns but faintly heard.

11:30.—Lively Russian cannonade on east throwing shot up Feng-huang-ch'eng road.

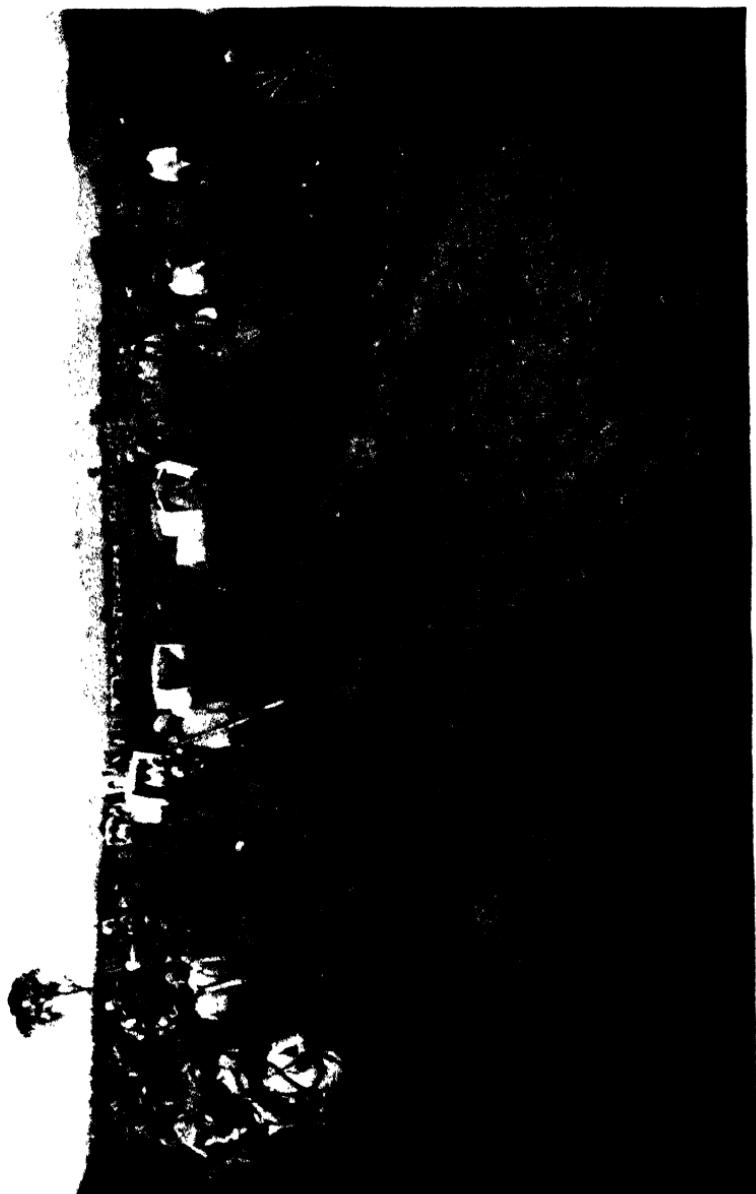
For four days I had now made the round of the battlefield, and on this, the fifth, I started up the T'ai-tzü to find out the significance of the last attack of the day before, which was made by the Japanese from the direction of Wang-pao-t'ai. The Russians had all the time feared a crushing attack upon their center, which they kept strongly guarded. But the Village of Kao-li-ch'un at the mouth of the road was quiet, and at the batteries on the hill to the right, where I took tiffin in the breastworks, there was only an occasional

shot fired. The commander of this battery had the air of a true soldier. He reminded me of the men who proved their military ability in our Civil War. An American could not have seemed more of my kind. He was anything but the "Chinovnik," whom the Russian alike despises. He merely asked me if I had my papers, and was entirely satisfied with an affirmative, asking me not to take them out. I could not resist the concern with which he regarded the situation, as he could not help but know it now. He was undoubtedly a brave man, and as he led me up to the range-finder and pointed out the Japanese position into which he was planting a desultory fire, he said impressively, although I had never seen him before, "If the Japanese win this war, America will have to fight Japan. Your country will have to fight Japan." The driven look and the resignation to the inevitable, which now characterized so many of the Russians, was in his face and pose. Capture, loss of his guns, defeat, death—all seemed to be alike to him.

A little further around were two batteries hid in the kao-liang. They were chugging like a full-fed thresher as I approached, throwing shot and shell into Meng-chia-fang. Ammunition wagons swept past up the valley and, swerving round to the left, entered the dry bed of a stream and arrived at the guns. Giving the rein to an artilleryman where the gun horses were concealed, I went up to the batteries.

They were firing steadily, and I noticed with curiosity and astonishment that at least fifteen per cent. of their own shells were bursting within a few hundred yards of the muzzles of their guns, showing the defects of their ammunition.

A young officer pointed out the position, as well as the signal officer of his battery, standing on a distant hill, to the right of whom again, on the skyline, was a battery that had had a terrible shelling a few hours before. Every upland



The Xth Corps escaping from the eastern hills with its long train of wounded



## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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had its complete defense works, and in the most unexpected places one came upon rifle-pits, trenches, and breastworks occupied or destined to be occupied by the rear-guard before many hours passed. A prisoner, a Japanese, was brought down the road—the soldiers, apparently very proud of him, had given him a piece of their black bread to chew upon. He seemed unfamiliar indeed with the nutriment, and I have no doubt he contrasted it with his own sweet white rice. He trudged along like a man resting—a model for a sculptor—erect, elastic, a king beside the slaves around him. His uniform was a jacket molded to his figure by the muscles beneath, short, roundabout, and spare at the neck. Bandy legs covered with muscle-molded khaki, linen leggins, and short, broad toe-turned marching shoes. A staff officer rode behind me out of the position, and I made my way alone to Chiao-fan-t'un, where the firing had revived.

The Russians were disputing every hillock against the repeated assaults of the Japanese. The echo of bursting shrapnel, always the terrorizing shrapnel, was fierce; and the battle now moved on with the regularity and precision of a machine. The combatants were now so close at this point that the guns seemed to hug. Shells from the unseen Japanese guns were fanning the muzzles of our battery right at the top of the little pass separating Chiao-fan-t'un from Meng-chia-fang, while on the opposite hill a Japanese, so close that I could make out the outlines of his cap—shoveling up shale to make a shelter or a gun position—wriggled like a salamander in a fire so hot that it seemed to pare off the entire crest of the hill as a wave rolls flotsam up a beach! The upper part of the man's body, moving like a pump-handle, disappeared, appeared, disappeared throughout the afternoon in a spot where it was incredible that anything could live. One gun alone was doing the work, sending shell after shell in such rapid succession that they broke like the

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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thong and cracker of a whip, encircling the hilltop and whisking its crest away!

After watching this marvelous spectacle for two hours the firing began to increase on the west. It was now five o'clock. As I went over the long low hills constituting the inner battery position opposite the south wall of the Chinesc city, I became entangled in a network of half-finished defense works, where were treacherous ditches and huge timbers scattered about. Extricating myself with difficulty I passed on and was surprised to find the ridge deserted. But the batteries were now concealed at the foot of the hills behind the kao-liang; and the whistle and howl of the shells was still so vicious as to make the flesh creep. It was cloudy and growing into half-light of evening. Looking back I could plainly see the lurid flash of the guns where I had taken tiffin near the mouth of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road, and a sudden wish possessed me, a longing to be with the brave commander through the night. Here I passed the engineers on the last little knoll, removing débris where they had dug trenches that were never used. They had stepped aside to allow wounded to pass. These I followed down the crooked road into the kao-liang, into the gloom and the night of the relentless kao-liang. Soldiers burning with fever cast away their shirts, and between two companions hunchbacked along the slimy track, their arched backs and bandaged chests kneading and hugging the steel, the clot and the fever in their vitals. Oh! but war is sweet! Better they were solitary on the ghostly peak, rigid within the deserted trench, quiet on the silent ridge, or cold-faced and puddle-choked within the dark kao-liang, than to wander lost to their death that night!

For some time, in front, the long line of hills leading away from Shou-shan was flowered with explosions like a diffused volcano. In the half day, half night, now the fire,

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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and now the fleece of the bursting shells leapt into view. Quick, Agatha, over the hill, out of range, out of sight of an enemy whom nothing escapes! But it is only to feel that to dodge a bullet here is but to meet the missile there. But the mare is only human, and she seems to know, as she knew when a few days later we gave the slip to our Japanese captors. We passed a battery in the kao-liang—the blue, purple, green lights of the kao-liang—long tongues of flame licking the blades toward us. Under the grawsome light and before the grawsome spectacle, Agatha never flinched.

The battle line lengthened on the south and west as the Japanese, who kept up an insidious rush through the south valley all day, replacing the lost reserves, plunged with indomitable determination into the charge. The Russian line was swept back—all but the little garrison, which would not surrender. There were men there who never surrendered. Some were swallowed up in the enemy's lines. Some came back in litters, and one, passing through the compound of the Scotch missionary, Dr. Westwater, sang, as he was borne along with his arm gone, of the glory of Kouropatkin. Four days later, when I was a captive in the Japanese lines, I learned what became of this brave little garrison, of whom scarcely more than a half dozen escaped. All the world now knows how they were bottled with sandbags in a gallery of one of the trenches, and their lives spared by their gallant captors when they had been completely conquered.

At seven darkness closed the contest, and in my dispatch concerning the day's work (among the very last dispatches sent out of Liao-yang) I was obliged to say that it was not possible at that hour to know the significance of the day's fight. This proved true, for reasons which made the morrow a memorable day. In the night Mischenko was detached from the extreme right and dispatched fifteen miles northward to oppose Kuroki, who in his dash for the Russian rear

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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had arrived in front of the last Russian hill position east of Yen-t'ai. This night of September 1st was one of terrible suffering for those soldiers of the rear-guard, whom no aid could reach. It had been growing damp in the kao-liang, and a great storm which had been gathering throughout the afternoon broke over the battlefield just as the cannon stopped. Across and through this three or four miles of kao-liang plain the maimed and wounded wandered, lost in the serpentine roads, wrenched about in the slippery paths, caught in the sloughs and ditches—brave, whipped, but unconquered men, doing the will of the Czar.

The order of the battlefield on the evening of this day was approximately as follows: Stackelberg was still facing Oku on the railway and to the west of the railway, his right flank after Mischenko was detached, left to General Greikoff. On Stackelberg's left, facing Nodzu, was Ivanoff with the Eastern Army, and on the left of this, the Tenth Corps facing Nishi. Ivanoff had his headquarters in the Village of Ta-shih, but now moved back to a point east of the native city where he had two pontoon bridges in his rear. All day these bridges had been crowded with transports going north, and it was apparent that the entire army south of the T'ai-tzü was making good its prospect of retreat. A hundred thousand men were moving when the night came!

The troops east of Stackelberg still held the hill positions covering the south road, the Meng-chia-fang road and the Feng-huang-ch'eng road. Though the Japanese had broken the center and closed in on Stackelberg along the railway, the east remained undisturbed. The Russian general, however, was not deceived by the situation. When he withdrew Mischenko to strengthen the east flank north of the T'ai-tzü, he at the same time fell back uniformly from the Japanese frontal attack.

The morning of September 1st was one of bright sunlight



(1)



(3)



(2)



(4)



## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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and calm. There were no traces of the storm of the night before. But Stackelberg had fallen back from Shou-shan, leaving it in possession of the Japanese, who had early discovered the operation. The sense of this terrible fact made the peace of that eventful morning sinister indeed, for it meant that the evacuation of the city was a matter of only a few hours. At eight o'clock all civilians and camp-followers were ordered out. In an hour of unwarranted excitement the Russian commissare of police ordered all Chinese to leave the city within two days. But as the Chinese never comprehend any peremptory order, no matter from whom it emanates, it had no effect whatever. On the other hand, the foreign merchants and camp-followers besieged the railway station for transportation which they could not get and, caught in a trap, began to offer their goods in the street. The station was crowded but orderly. The platform was filled with officers. From where? Who could tell? Shou-shan loomed up but a couple of miles down the track, and it seemed to me each second would bring its hell of shrieking shell about our ears, but there was not a man there who seemed to care a button. It was more than an hour after, when I was finishing my tiffin in the refreshment room, where every one was attending to his own wants, and the Chinese waiters were so overtaxed they hurried about in confusion, that the first shell whinnied and bowled along through the upper air until it arrived opposite the post-office, where it broke.

The effect upon the crowd was instantaneous. Every one thereabout realized that they were under the muzzles of the guns of perhaps several batteries only hid by the vast kao-liang fields to the south. In a few moments most of the population was moving northward with shoulders shrugged as though anticipating the next shell, or the third, or a volley upon their individual backs. At the third or fourth

shell, troops, hospitals, merchants, residents, railway trains, cleared from the settlement, leaving only transport and the quartermaster's guards in care of the stores. Vehicles of every description were levied upon to remove the stores piled along the track—Chinese carts, ammunition limbers, artillery, each bore off whatever of grain or goods it could accommodate. This business was carried on with the usual Russian composure, under the certainty that the Japanese were at the same time placing more guns in position at Shou-shan. Coming out of the restaurant, I mounted my horse and rode through the settlement. In front of the telegraph office a shell burst, killing a cavalry horse under the nose of my own, while another shell burst over a hospital on my right. Others landed in the station garden and on the buildings parallel to the railway. Under the old pagoda, between the settlement and the city wall, was a summer garden from which the mid-day guests and the proprietors and waiters unceremoniously bolted, leaving the restaurant at the mercy of whoever dared to loot it, and plunged into the helter-skelter of panic-stricken officers and orderlies, troops and camp-followers, seeking refuge under the north wall or across the T'ai-tzü. The roads were strewn with goods and chattels and suggested a rout. The Russian batteries now opened a fire on Shou-shan, which they had but lately occupied, maintaining a demonstration in that direction all day.

Inside the city the people were quietly awaiting the outcome in their houses. The streets were given over to stray baggage trains here and there hurrying through, and to the curious. The native shops were closed as soon as the first shell broke over the settlement. Hastily removing my baggage from the city, I went across the T'ai-tzü. Here was all the paraphernalia of the armies scattered through the fields en route north. Re-enforcements of artillery were going up along the hills, while a few trains moved along the

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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railway. The hospital corps were busy burying dead by the roadsides in previously selected places, or hurrying corpses and wounded to some unperceived haven. Toward evening I returned to the city, which seemed to be growing ominously calm and solitary. From the northwest corner and the heliograph station, which was directly in range of the heavy fire delivered against one of the Russian batteries outside the west gate, I could overlook the settlement, which was now completely deserted except for some occasional wounded men being carried in through one of the breaches in the west wall. Sometimes, too, a soldier, having looted his fill of vodka and waving the half-empty bottle in his hand, staggered from between the gray buildings and came into the city. Continuing along the wall, I arrived at the southwest corner, inside which a Red Cross corps had pitched camp, and, mounting to the top, where I looked almost over the battery to which I have referred, I could see that it was being pounded as with a mighty pile-driver and now excavated as by some subterranean monster, while the air seemed to have reached the boiling point. The greatest experiences of my life were now crowded into a moment.

Three miles to the south the Japanese were moving grandly over the low hills that had been the Russian innermost battery position. It was a long distance, but I could plainly see, and was the first there to discover a battery, and, in the breathless moment that succeeded, a company of infantry skirting the abandoned Russian artillery works, open order; then another leaving its men and officers strewn over the slope, but coming grandly over the ridge and into the kao-liang below. At this point and on this occasion one battalion lost every officer, and, led by a corporal, was taken and intrenched near Ta-shih, where Ivanoff's headquarters had been a few hours before. This I learned from the column commanders themselves after I had been taken in

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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their lines. It is such feats as this which make the Japanese army of superior metal. If for each soldier to do his duty makes the army invincible, as some great generals have averred, then the army of the Japanese, which proved itself capable of doing its duty, may justly claim to be one of the very best.

By this splendid advance the Japanese gained the plain in front of the last Russian intrenchments, and throughout that night not a soul slept in the city without the ever-present realization that the Japanese were slowly creeping upon the defenders. And dawn proved that the defenders had slowly fallen back before the encroachment.

The battle now developing along the east and northeast, I proceeded at daylight across the T'ai-tzü and along the railway to the north. At 7:30 Kouropatkin's train went north and stopped at a way station a third of the distance to Yen-t'ai. A long line of battle developed along the east, and for perhaps five miles the shells could be seen bursting over the crests of the lower hills. Artillery continued to move in that direction. The greatest miscellany of travel lined the road. Rickshaws carrying personal effects, canteen stores, furniture, were interlarded with civilian refugees on all sorts and conditions of animals and vehicles. Hospitals at all points.

Toward evening I arrived in front of the battle line. Two regiments were retreating as I came up along the railway leading to the coal mines. At the instant we came under sharp rifle-fire, and in the same moment the regiments received orders to go back. The Russians, all but beaten, had discovered that the army of Kuroki had spent its force after three days of fighting without rest, and they quietly held their ground until re-enforcements were brought up. Fighting continued at this point two days later, but the Russians succeeded in making good their retreat to the Hun

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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River. The battle which raged here with great sacrifice and desperation on both sides, closed at sundown with the two armies occupying virtually the same positions with which they had begun the day.

That night I was lucky enough to be the guest of a transport officer in the rear of the army, and to my amazement he solemnly opened champagne! Whether it is the devotion of the Russian to champagne—champagne for breakfast, champagne for lunch, and champagne for dinner—that makes him a good retreater, I do not know, but I am convinced that champagne in any case comes first, let retreat come when it may.

Later in the evening I passed through Yen-t'ai on the railway.

It was now evident that Kuroki's rush for the Russian rear had failed. The following morning, September 3d, I again turned south to find what was to be the fate of Liao-yang. A long line of transport and everything attaching to a great army still poured along the several roads leading to Muk-den. Parallel to the railway the road was a hundred yards wide, and as I approached closer to Liao-yang hundreds of coolies were seen engaged in making a graded road as though to secure the artillery of the rear-guard a safe retreat in case of rain. Where the commander-in-chief's train was waiting, a field hospital filled with wounded occupied a large space beside the track and was receiving additional wounded from the hills on the east and from the kao-liang on the west. An officer here told me that Mischenko had reported the repulse of Kuroki and his retirement and had recrossed the railway with his cavalry and artillery division to take part in a big infantry attack now being made. This officer said that the war was now to be decided, but I could not make out whether he regarded his own people as beaten or the Japanese. I suppose that his statement was identical in class with

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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those many ambiguous remarks which one hears at all times among Russians or any other people under the same circumstances.

I could now see a great smoke arising from the Liao-yang settlement, and I knew that the stores which it was impossible to remove were being burned, perhaps the settlement itself. Three miles north of the city I met an American photographer, who told me that he had heard cheering in the kao-liang west of the railway, and supposed the Russians were making their infantry attack. Liao-yang looked to him like a city of the dead, and the zone bordering the T'ai-tzü, he said, was under fire. Urging me to take the low road next the railway embankment, he rode away.

The plain bordering the north bank of the T'ai-tzü was the theater of a scene such as one never may see except in the rear-guard of an army. In this zone of fire, camp-followers were lounging about with their spare horses for the guns and baggage. Baggage wagons went bounding and rattling along half-filled with stores looted from the shops in the city and the settlement. As these wagons neared the little camps along the road, they whipped up their horses to a run to save their cargo from these half-soldiers, half-outlaws, not forgetting to throw a few handfuls of lump sugar or biscuits to the outlaws as a compromise. Along the east, leading north from the T'ai-tzü for a couple of miles, the battle sputtered—a line of shells bursting along the ridges, while in the foreground beside the road there were being buried those who were destined to be among the very last of the Liao-yang dead. Liao-yang was now the rear of Kouropatkin's great army of approximately 180,000 and the front of a Japanese army of equal number. But the appearance of the place at noon—especially the presence still of two large pontoon bridges in the river—reassured me, and I went into the city, entering by one of the numerous

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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breaches made by the Russian engineers. Just inside it was sunny and quiet, and here I met three officers who smiled in an uncommon way and bowed extravagantly. But this conveyed no idea of the terror along the south wall at the same moment. There the rear-guard was streaming through the gates under Japanese shell-fire which carried away the tower of the main gate, battered the semi-lune walls, and struck death and amazement among the Chinese, scores of whom began to pour into the native Red Cross refuge and into the mission at Dr. Westwater's. A Russian officer hurried hatless and scared through the streets.

Where the Russian rear-guard moved in and around the walled city, the Japanese kept up a continuous fire all afternoon. With the approach of evening and the arrival of the maimed and dying in baskets, rude litters, and on foot, at the mission, and the soldier-wounded, the night promised to be more terrible than ever. Cannonading was heard in the north, and at sundown there was a revival all along the battle line. The staff of the rear-guard commander declared their determination to hold the city until the next day. They had lost 11,000 men, but against all odds the city would be kept until morning. But, as at other places, this staff reckoned without their host, for at eight o'clock they were driven back, the tide of battle was swept north and was but faintly heard in the distance, the Japanese were in possession of the gates, and I was a prisoner!

Two reasons were given why the battle of Liao-yang was lost. The first is, that Kouropatkin, seeing the blunders of his generals, ordered a retreat to prevent calamity; the second, that of the Japanese army there were two divisions aside from the main body, and from Kuroki's force, which he had not been able to locate, and fearing Kuroki might have these, he elected to retreat successfully rather than fight and fail. But the real causes of the failure of the

Grand Army to win a victory at Liao-yang are due to the inferiority of the Russian to the Japanese troops, for it is certain that in either situation, as an attacking or a defending force, the Japanese would have been successful. The effects of four months of defeat and retreat, beginning at Port Arthur and in Korea, resulted in a state of demoralization which even with the advantages which Kouropatkin had in his selected position at Liao-yang, made his task nearly hopeless. The losses by death, wounds, sickness and capture during the month of July were scarcely replaced by the railway, so that there had been no important increase in his strength for a whole month, although his whole plan of war had been aimed at achieving a powerful increase of strength at this vital hour. While in intrenchments, such as Kouropatkin had prepared, he should have defeated the Japanese with a greatly inferior force; the army itself declared that at least twice as many Russians as Japanese were necessary for even a moderate success. During the first days of the battle numbers of officers were to be met in the rear who had flung aside the responsibilities of the field and seemed anxious to forget the accumulated disasters of the campaign in dissipation. The gayety in the pagoda garden did not begin to abate until the army was in its last defenses, and up to the time the railway station was shelled one could hear the tinkle of Swiss music-boxes and the guffaw of American gramophones in the officers' quarters in the settlement. And the last trains leaving Liao-yang carried away women of the *cafés chantant* fleeing to Mukden and Tieh-ling.

But it was noticeable at Liao-yang that the army had begun to place a more just estimate upon the enemy; and then realizing the probability of signal defeat, and after defeat was an accomplished fact, they declared that the war had not yet begun. They believed that the Japanese would not

## *Surrender of the Army Base*

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dare to attack them in the plain, yet they admitted that they were outmatched in mountain fighting.

The opposing armies were approximately 180,000 each. The would-be authorities on both sides varied as much as a hundred thousand in their estimates at the time. The losses were about ten per cent. of this. One hundred and five thousand rounds of artillery ammunition was expended at Liao-yang, which was said to have been more than was expended in all the Franco-Prussian War; and furthermore, it was said that more ammunition was expended in one day than during the whole Russo-Turkish War. Infantry regiments fired as much as 1,200,000 cartridges during the period of the battle. Sixty per cent. of the Russian losses at Liao-yang were from artillery fire, thus justifying the designation of the contest as an "artillery battle."

The story of the Russian Army of Manchuria from P'ing-yang in Korea to Mukden is one of falling back, and, looked upon in this light, the achievements of General Kouropatkin were worthy of consideration and credit. The evidence was pretty conclusive that the Russian army had generally been bested by an inferior number of Japanese troops. Looking at the contest in front of Liao-yang with a desire to appreciate the efforts of both sides, it appears in some respects to have been one of the greatest up to that time. Certainly six days of more or less constant artillery dueling over a battle-line from ten to twenty-five miles in length, under such difficulties of transportation as the Japanese surmounted, must stand as an achievement. The results were that Kouropatkin fought a hard and creditable battle and that the Japanese, though defeated and disappointed in their aim, yet won a glorious victory.

General Kouropatkin's personal endeavors in the events leading up to the battle of Liao-yang were considerable. While attending to the smallest details of the army of the

south, of which he was in personal command, he made strenuous excursions to all parts of the line. When the Japanese threatened the great pass from Hsu-yen, he led forty battalions to the position as if with the intention to attack, and then hurried ninety miles by train and saddle that he might appear on Kuroki's front at the Shi River. The disaffection among his officers was now considerable, and the incompetency of the general staff was so conspicuous, and the demands made upon him by St. Petersburg and by Alexeieff so onerous as to inspire his complaint. The conduct of his staff was a recognized scandal, and especially the personal conduct of his chief-of-staff, who, with his military duties combined matrimony, and against whom it has been a reproach from that day, that he married during the battle of Liao-yang—a battle planned by the Japanese to be a Sedan to the Russian army—a woman with whom he had had an intrigue and who was introduced at headquarters contrary to military regulations.

When the battle came Kouropatkin visited the different parts of the field, and especially at the close of the battle, he appeared east of Yen-t'ai and advanced with a battalion to the firing line. It may be supposed that Kouropatkin, knowing well the great weaknesses of the officer, and the shortcomings of the army organization, regarded as more important than anything else, except victory, a protecting care of the Grand Army. Though he had arrested the advance of Kuroki, he relinquished Liao-yang. For the welfare of the army he sacrificed a little more of the ambition and pride of the promoters of the Eastern Empire, in which he appears to have proved himself more of a friend to the people than to the government. As all of southern Manchuria and Korea was lost to the Eastern Empire, and the Japanese were at the outskirts of Mukden, it was evident that the war must go on.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE BATTLEFIELD

SEVERAL pontoon bridges still spanned the T'ai-tzü River at noon on the third of September. For two miles the approach was in the field of fire and as I crossed the river the Japanese were breaking shrapnel along the south wall and their shells were reaching the inside of the north wall. Some had exploded in the ya-men of the Chinese magistrate.

The city was in a state of distress in these closing hours of the Russian defense. During the night of the third there had been a terrifying rifle fire from the trenches in front of the south wall, and the breaking of shrapnel which began at dawn was resulting in the most pitiful suffering among the native Chinese. The hospital of Dr. Westwater, the veteran Scotch missionary, was full, and at three o'clock in the afternoon the natives began carrying their wounded into Dr. Westwater's own compound. They were brought in in baskets and on doors, while numbers were still able to be led. At the northeast corner of the city, on the banks of the T'ai-tzü rested the general in charge of the rear-guard, and the staff there was confident that the city would be held until the following day.

Satisfied with these assurances, I remained within the city walls to assist in the care of the native wounded. At evening the sentries had been removed from the city gates and Liao-yang was an outpost. The firing ceased and at dark the Russians withdrew. At eleven o'clock the Japanese had scouted the west wall and immediately occupied it, and we

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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had hardly finished our work until we were in the Japanese lines.

The forces that took possession of the city were of the army of General Nodzu, and at dawn I got my first glimpse of the interior of the Japanese lines. When I should have been concealed in the kao-liang roads north of the T'ai-tzü, the Japanese infantry were marching past the entrance to the compound and were in possession of the railway bridge by which it might have been possible before midnight to have escaped. At that time my mare was quietly munching her feed, and I was sleeping soundly. In the heavy fog the Japanese troops occupied the T'ai-tzü, and at dawn were in touch with the Russian rear-guard half-way to Yen-t'ai.

After a period of months, a virtual prisoner within our own lines because of the anomalous position which a correspondent occupies, it was a situation of the intensest interest to look upon the wonderful Japanese army, whose mysterious and insidious operations had forced the Grand Army of the Czar to abandon the many miles of its defenses and nearly half of the Eastern Empire, to flee its dead and wounded, and compelled it to bear a burden of national disgrace and the whole world's reproach. My first view was of a company marching along under the north wall, which I beheld from the vantage of a compound wall, while Dr. Westwater, a resident of Liao-yang and a member of the Red Cross, wearing the insignia on his left arm, advanced to speak to the captain. It was interesting to see the quiet bandy-legged privates grasp the stocks of their rifles and then lapse into repose while their captain explained to Dr. Westwater that he knew precisely who he was and that he lived in the house opposite. The officer pointed out this house on the map, directed Dr. Westwater to the headquarters of the officer in charge of the city and passed on.

At three o'clock in the afternoon General Nodzu sent

Captain M. Sakabe and Mr. R. K. Kimura with Mr. Mina-gawa, an interpreter, to see me and to arrange my passage to neutral territory. I was delighted with these gentlemen, especially as Captain Sakabe said that they appreciated my position as a non-combatant and a neutral, and that while they were anxious to possess any information regarding the Russian army, they could not ask me to inform against the Russians, and they wished it to be perfectly understood that I was under no duress to do so. Captain Sakabe explained to me the hardships of the Ta-ku-shan Army, which, he said, had come by most difficult roads through mud and rain from the sea to Kouropatkin's selected position. For a long distance it had followed the foothills, where there were no roads and no bridges. From the moment they left the Bay of Korea until they arrived at Liao-yang they had, he said, been lost in a strange region.

He took a map from his pocket and explained the route which they had taken, and I noticed that it was a Russian field-map on which the names of all the villages and towns were carefully marked in Japanese characters in red ink. From him I received an authentic account of the charge of a Japanese battalion over the south ridge, which I had three days before witnessed from the walls of Liao-yang, and he said that by the time it had reached the bottom of the ridge it had lost every officer and was taken command of by a corporal. In the fighting farther south, he related that they had captured in a Russian camp a Russian officer's diary, at the contents of which they were astonished. It described a scene in an officer's tent where drinking and gambling that had been going on through the evening ended in a quarrel, in the midst of which one officer abruptly threw down his cards, quit the tent with angry looks and did not return. This picture of suspended discipline and dissoluteness among the Russian officers seemed to strike them as a revelation.

Taking advantage of parole, kindly allowed by General Nodzu, I visited the scene of the battle. The Pagoda Garden was so quiet that it appeared to be deserted, but after I had passed I discovered that it was in fact crowded with Japanese infantry who were lounging in the little grove where the restaurant had been, and many of the soldiers had perched themselves upon the masonry of the pagoda base. They were preparing to eat their midday meal, and were so quiet that I had passed within a hundred yards of them without suspecting their existence. I saw the body of one of our Red Cross wagons that had been abandoned stretched across the road, and here and there military relics, testifying to the hurried escape from the railway settlement on September 1st. The grain stores that it had been impossible to remove, and which, with the sheds that covered them, had been fired the day before, were still burning. But out of these stores large quantities of oats had been rescued, and there was an immense quantity of rice and millet that had not been the least damaged. A few railway trucks also remained uninjured, together with flour and other stores in the shops of the sutlers. For the most part, however, the buildings in which these shops were installed had been gutted by the flames.

The buildings of the railway settlement, being a part of the railway property, had not been damaged except by the shell fire. General Kouropatkin's headquarters remained practically the same, with the bunting in the Imperial colors still ornamenting the pavilion where his private train had stood. In the house occupied by the Grand Duke Boris there was an uncommon display of champagne bottles, and some Japanese privates had picked up a few of these and were standing grinning in the windows. The railway station presented a forlorn and desolate appearance. Nearly all the windows had been broken by concussion. The platform and

the tracks for hundreds of yards were strewn with ammunition boxes and empty shells, among which a few soldiers were here and there loitering. A reminder of the rain brought down by the last cannonade existed in the little pools of quiet water in which these objects were reflected, and to accent the low estate to which this Manchurian Trocadero had fallen, a squad of dragoons had hitched their horses to the window sash and were bivouacking in the station-master's room. At the southwest corner of the city wall, where one of our batteries had received such a heavy shelling on the evening of September 1st, were a few Russian bodies still unburied. But there were few other evidences of the fray in the vicinity of the south wall except the damages made by the Japanese shells. One of these had carried away nearly the whole of the pagoda over the south gate, and three shells had struck just over the main archway.

When General Nodzu had received instructions from Marshal Oyama to deliver me to the American consul-general, Mr. H. B. Miller, at Niu-ch'uang in neutral territory, I proceeded southward where was to be seen the results of the battle along the railway. During the first, second and third of September the Japanese, upon whom had fallen the responsibility of clearing the battlefield and of burying the enemy's dead, had interred most of the dead bodies and parts of bodies, but there were a few ghastly figures lying blackened in the sun by the roadside. On the slopes of Shou-shan, where so many hundreds of Japanese had been killed in their repeated attempts to rush the Russian intrenchments, great excavations had been made, and in one place, where a whole Japanese company had been annihilated, the trunk of a small tree covered with inscriptions testified to the human débris enclosed beneath. On these graves were empty shells in which were wild flowers which the soldiers had gathered. The area for hundreds of yards was strewn

with caps, leggings, bits of Russian and Japanese clothing and accouterments, with bayonet scabbards, cartridge boxes, shoes, and other mementos of the combatants. And from among the cornflowers, waving in the Indian summer sunshine, and a warm wind from Mongolia, I picked up a piece of Russian band music, the title of which I observed was, "The Thunders of Victory." The bodies of two of our Russian dead lay near, still unburied.

It was evident that terrible fighting had taken place along the railway embankment skirting the west slope of Shou-shan. In places this embankment was four to six feet high, and was nearly destroyed by excavations which the Japanese and Russian soldiers had dug from time to time during the several days of their contest. The track itself was uninjured, and while I was going over the silent field the Japanese military train came by. It was no less than two Russian railway trucks loaded with Japanese wounded, and a few Russian prisoners, being propelled by Chinese coolies, who entirely surrounded it. Some of them were pulling by ropes and others pushing wherever they could get a purchase.

Although it was now several days since the Russians had quit the positions in which they had held their own, some of the Japanese artillery contingents who had played a conspicuous part in the desperate fighting at the end of the battle were still resting in their bivouacs. The villages were exceedingly dirty, battered and desolate. The tall millet was dragged down and every path and roadway was lined with shelter pits, disguised with green millet stalks gathered in the night. The Japanese had never been able to capture any Russian locomotives, but they were in possession of a large number of freight trucks with which they were able, after the battle of Liao-yang, to transport their wounded and prisoners to Niu-ch'uang and Dalny. At An-shan-chan and Hai-ch'eng we passed trains of ten and fifteen trucks, all



(2)



(1)



propelled by Chinese coolies. The railway had been left intact throughout the Russian retreat. At this period of the war the Japanese advance had not been regarded as serious enough to warrant the destruction of the costly bridges with which the railway was equipped. After the battle of Liao-yang the advance of the Japanese was so serious that all of the bridges were destroyed, including the stone piers; but at this time the Japanese had everything for the operation of the road except locomotives. Unfortunately for them the width of the track was of such a gauge that no foreign locomotives could be fitted to it. Until the gauge could be changed, therefore, the rolling stock had to be operated solely by hand. In this way they were able to transport very large quantities of military supplies, which were stored at Hai-ch'eng and in transit from that place to the new army base at Liao-yang, where Marshal Oyama was moving his headquarters.

At An-shan-chan I passed the night in an empty room, where I slept on a Chinese mat. In the same enclosure with the building in which I spent the night was a large shed used as a kitchen by the soldiers, and in this they cooked their rice. I found them dumping it in large quantities from the boilers on a long wide table, where it was heaped up like snow. I applied to the cook for a bowl of it, tendering a piece of their money in payment. The cook returned me a heaping bowl, but declined the money. In striking contrast to the hospitality and courtesy of this simple soldier was the conduct of a dragoon at noon the next day at the Hai-ch'eng bridge. I was walking along leading my mare when I was ordered out of the way by the dragoon, who was riding. As all my outward appearance entitled me to consideration as an officer, I was considerably surprised. I had often heard that such things were done by Japanese civilians in the streets of the treaty-ports of Japan. I suppose he

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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took me to be a Russian prisoner. It was the only instance where I had met with rudeness from the Japanese.

When we turned from the railway in the direction of the Liao River, we came upon bodies of troops moving in from Niu-ch'uang to re-enforce the army. They were guarded on the north by a brigade of cavalry under Prince Kai-yen, brother of the Mikado. The infantrymen were young recruits, looking to be seventeen to twenty years of age—handsome fellows and possessing all the attractions which are seen in the young soldier. I thought I had never seen finer and more soldierly looking recruits. During the second night out from Liao-yang there was a great rain which flooded the entire lower Liao plain and made this line of communication very difficult for the Japanese. The sunken roads were full of water and so deep and treacherous that one of the party in crossing was thrown from his horse into the water. Along the Imperial road parallel to the railway the Japanese commissary employed Chinese wheelbarrows to a certain extent in the transportation of army stores, but here they had employed Chinese carriers, especially during the rains, because the country was almost completely impassable for vehicles. It required several days for my baggage to cross this plain of forty miles, and I received it several days later at Niu-ch'uang. General Nodzu in discharging me from the theater of war presented me with a box of cigars, a bottle of brandy and a Russian rifle captured opposite Shou-shan. The officer in charge of me, Lieutenant —, paid homage to the greatness of Russia and of her people, and with the most agreeable impressions of the Japanese officers and of the army itself, I entered the so-called neutral zone, between the Liao River and the Great Wall.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE NEUTRAL ZONE

THE story of the neutral zone between the Liao River and the Great Wall, and embracing Mongolia, as it concerns the war, is principally a story of the army's infractions of neutral rights, since it was a line of communication and supply for it until the Japanese occupied the adjoining territory, and whatever use the Japanese might have made of it afterward lost its importance because the war was virtually ended. The story of the neutral zone is also largely the story of China's part in the war.

Seeing her inability to participate in this foreign war instituted in her territory, China declared neutrality. But no attempt was made at enforcing neutrality outside of the Great Wall, except in the instance of the Hsin-min-t'un and Yin-k'ou railways, where she was glad to delegate to the foreign managers the observance of any scruples which as Britains they owed to the public or to the belligerents. Mongolia was invaded and a whole caravan of ammunition loaded in wool bales on camels and intended for Port Arthur crossed from Irkutsk to Kalgan, and arrived outside the walls of Peking before it was interfered with by the Chinese Government. An unusual incident occurred west of Kulun in Eastern Mongolia, which, if it were not an attempt at frustration by the Chinese Government, was a providential retribution visited upon the military trespassers. A long cart train of ammunition intended for Port Arthur was this time loaded at some point south of the Sungari River and pro-

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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ceeded by way of Fa-ku-men with the idea of thus disguising its origin and nature and ultimately reaching the Gulf of Chih-li in China proper, from where it could be shipped to Port Arthur. The ammunition was represented to be silver and was guarded by about a score of Cossacks, who were seemingly accompanying it out of hostile into neutral territory in the interests of native commerce. West of Kulun the cart train was attacked by a band of natives and a number of the Cossacks were killed. The character of the cargo was disclosed by the attack and the raiders retired in disgust. The attempt of the Russian military was exposed, and the enterprise had to be abandoned. The Chinese carters and cart owners conspired with the native officials and demanded 20,000 silver dollars indemnity, which the Russian military promptly paid to hush up the case. It was one of the few instances in which the Tartar general at Mukden was master of a Russian scandal, and before he effected a settlement with the parties concerned, three commissions had to visit Mongolia!

The Eastern Empire was in possession of the neutral zone for four years preceding the war—except six months between May, 1903, and the opening of war—at which time their military established Cossack posts along the seaboard to Kou-pang-tzü and at Hsin-min-t'un, and employed the roads and communications for all kinds of traffic, especially telegrams, military supplies for the use of military and civil agents, messengers, orderlies, and mails. Many humorous incidents were developed on account of the imperfect authority wielded there by the British, who had ownership in the railway, and by the native authorities, and also by the Russian and Japanese military during their usurpation. Most all kinds of military stores were accepted by the railway, and no objection was made so long as the fact was not widely advertised. Military were cordially welcomed so long as

## *The Neutral Zone*

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they kept their uniforms in their portmanteaus, and it was only on one occasion—and this must have been out of pure mischief—that a Russian officer's baggage was held up and confiscated by the Chinese Government through the agency of a British train conductor. Great quantities of stores found their way through the neutral zone by rail, and reached the Russian army bases. This became such an abuse that the Chinese Government was forced to make a customs regulation limiting any one cargo to something like fifteen hundred pounds. But in this manner a constant train of cargo for the supply of the Russian army moved from the China coast to Liao-yang and Mukden.

The Eastern Empire did not lose the neutral zone until the battle of Mukden, and then the army sent photographers to photograph crates of chickens and other supplies which in turn the Japanese brought in for their use, and made sorrowful charges against them to China and to the world. During Mischenko's raid a squadron of Cossacks appeared at a railway station, in neutral territory, and made a formal examination of the freight books to ascertain if the Japanese were shipping any cargoes that way, but finding everything in order no complaint was made.

Chinese statesmen explain that they had no sympathy with either belligerent, because both were friendly states and they themselves would, therefore, apply neutrality to all parts of the Empire except to Manchuria. The neutral zone, curiously enough, was left to the neutrality of the British railroad men, and it always seemed to the writer an especial tribute to the British spirit of fair play that neither the Russians nor the Japanese maintained any serious indictment against these railroad men.

There was an active rivalry between the Japanese and Russians for the favor of the Mongolian chiefs and princes. In the north and northeast the Russians were nearly supreme.

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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There were but one or two Mongolian satraps who were hostile to them; but in the south, where they especially needed the co-operation of the Mongols, to supply beef and horses, they met with some antagonism. Among the princes of influence was Alatsin, whom, preceding the war, the Japanese had entertained at their army maneuvers. He had just returned from this royal tour in Japan and had been photographed and entertained by the Japanese Legation in Peking, when the war broke out, and he proceeded to his capital in Mongolia, going by way of Kin-chou and the neutral zone. The Eastern Empire had spent years of preparation in view of just such arrangements as were required to secure large pony beef, and the feed supplies required in an emergency like this. But it turned out that in the neutral zone and the bordering Mongolian country, which was most accessible to their army, they exercised the least influence. One of their exasperations was the frequency with which Japanese horsemen appeared, overpowered their convoys, and drove off their herds. For although the Russian foragers surreptitiously commandeered their cattle, the Japanese, when they had access to the same country, possessed a most surprising intelligence regarding what was going on.

After declaring neutrality and providing for proper action south of the Great Wall, China took one sensible precaution. She advanced several thousand Chinese troops under General Ma from T'ung-chou east of Peking, out on the Jehol road to Chao-yang. The Russian military, feeling the reproach of their violation of strict neutrality by a semi-occupation in neutral territory, then assumed to justify the occupation and their violation of Chinese rights, by pretending that General Ma was a menace to them. This was such an imputation as General Ma had not been honored by since the battle of Tien-tsin. As a matter of fact, China's precaution was an

## *The Neutral Zone*

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intelligent warning against further encroachments by irresponsible Cossacks upon the neutral zone. Supplementing the Chinese troops of General Ma were those guarding the railways and the native yamens or public offices, who are really *gendarmes*. At Hsin-min-t'un the local official was a so-called general, and had a guard sufficient to patrol the vicinity and to convey foreigners in safety to the Russian lines at the Liao River several miles distant. A similar Russian convoy passed continually backward and forward from the Russian lines on the Mukden road.

It had frequently been asserted that Hsin-min-t'un and vicinity was a lawless region infested with bandits and running with blood. But in fact it was a quiet industrial native community, whose terrible deeds lived in the imaginations of its foreign visitors, and it had no elements so disorderly and threatening as the Cossack horsemen, who raided the streets in disregard of all traffic, and with a show of great fierceness. It was the residence of a number of distinguished foreigners, had a large telegraph staff, a valuable native trade, and was orderly, as its importance as the terminus of the railway proved.

There should, however, be one exception specified, because Hsin-min-t'un was the starting point of those sutler caravans which brought supplies and foreign stores from the China coast to Mukden and Liao-yang. The foreign sutlers were not less desperate, lawless and adventurous than native law-breakers. One or two of them lost their lives on the upper Liao River while en route by native boat to Mukden. They were probably believed to be Russian soldiers and were attacked by mistake, as it was of rare occurrence that the natives of Manchuria had attacked foreigners. Singularly enough, the Japanese themselves, after the occupation of Niu-ch'uang and the region half way to Hsin-min-t'un, never interfered with this traffic in Russian supplies. Even in the

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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battle of Mukden, when the Japanese troops advanced and cleared the Russians out of the region, they did not molest the Russian army sutlers that were passing through. A Greek sutler told the writer after the battle of Mukden that he had landed in Hsin-min-t'un from Tien-tsin with his cargo and found, after he had put it aboard his carts, that he was in the Japanese lines. A Japanese officer examined him and then gave him a convoy to take him and his goods through the line and advised him to hurry on.

The neutral zone was therefore an open highway to the Russians, and whatever of lawlessness and the terror of lawlessness belonged to it during the period of the war came from hostility between the belligerents and from the lawless foreign elements that follow armies. Among the latter were two American cowboys, one of whom murdered an innocent Chinese and escaped. Among the secret service officers and dispatch-bearers was Prince Radziwill, who entered Port Arthur during the first and heaviest assault made by Nogi during the siege, and escaped bearing messages to General Kouropatkin. Although his mission was widely advertised, like all other military agents, he was not molested and attracted no attention from the Chinese or Japanese authorities. The Russian intelligence department of the army sent agents under the guise of correspondents through these peaceable borders, one, a Dane. Many of these persons pictured themselves the heroes of great adventures in these quiet countrysides, where one might pass days without hearing a rifle shot and where the inhabitants were singularly peaceful and law-abiding.

Generally speaking, a class of people such as is called the scum of the earth, carried on their traffic here and became the go-betweens and the secret agents of the Russian intelligence service in Manchuria and China. Men who could qualify as having defrauded everybody else with whom they

## *The Neutral Zone*

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had come in contact were certain to get employment, and almost completely get the confidence of the Russian intelligence agents. It was astonishing the confidence which scoundrels received from them. I have known a man destitute of every moral quality receive *carte blanche* from the quartermaster general of the Russian army to go and come in the lines, and have seen him receive large contracts for army stores at the hands of the general staff. I have seen him default in the implied obligation, swindle his partners, and disappear. The only apparent qualification which the man had was his ability to drink, and officers of the general staff guarded him for days during his intoxication, in order to apprehend a favorable moment when they could confer responsibilities upon him. It might be said, from the evidence apparent to all, that by the army in general and the authorities in particular, one who did not drink, and drink to excess, was despised as a man and suspected as an enemy. And, furthermore, that if he was not a scoundrel he was not eligible to any trust. One of the last adventures of the secret service of the army was an attempt to transport ammunition from Mukden to Port Arthur by way of the Hsin-min-t'un Railway and the Chih-li coast, and the details of which are sufficient to show the truth of these statements.

As I was returning by way of the neutral zone around the Japanese and Russian lines to the Russian base, I met on the Mukden road about one hundred carts, apparently loaded with silver. It was, in fact, the reorganized Kulun expedition on its way to Hsin-min-t'un, where, under the guise of silver, about five hundred cases of ammunition were to be forwarded, via Taku to Port Arthur. A similar attempt by the same route where ammunition had been packed in grain bags and forwarded to the Port of Ching-wan-tao had failed. It was apprehended by the Chinese and confiscated. But this shipment, with other military and Red

Cross supplies, was loaded upon the Chinese Engineering & Mining Co.'s steamer, *Fu-p'ing*, at Taku. The steamer was in command of Captain Gray and was successfully cleared from Taku by the customs and set sail for Port Arthur. When near Port Arthur, it is reported to have stood off for twenty-four hours, and was then picked up by the Japanese and confiscated. It has been naturally supposed from the circumstances that Captain Gray violated his trust, but it appears that he made a conscientious effort to perform the very honorable and courageous task of running the Japanese blockade. The enterprise, in fact, according to the Russians themselves, was in charge of a disreputable Frenchman, who sold it out to the Japanese for a fixed sum of money. It was not the responsible employee, whose agent was of the nationality of the enemy's ally, but one of their own allies that was traitor to them. The Russian intelligence department received copies of the documents of the transaction. They expressed their disgust in these words: "We expected to deal with disreputable people, but not to be made to sing" (*faire de chantage*).

They seemed to possess the fundamental misconception that blockade-running, or any secret and dangerous business, required criminals and jail-birds. Having decided that it was a desperate undertaking to succor their beleaguered garrison, they seemed to reach the inference that only a disreputable person would do it, and they straightway began to look about for some rare scoundrel. The idea that a German, or a Briton, or an American, or any other national than that of their ally, could honestly and with fidelity run the blockade, or serve in their employ during the war, does not seem to have occurred to them. The British-controlled railway accepted and solicited all the cargo it could get for the use and assistance of the Russians and took no unnecessary and undesirable measures to discover whether it was or was

not contraband of war, which was not within its responsibilities. Being a neutral, John Bull played the part of the honest broker, but, like the abstainer, though not despised as a man, he was certainly suspected as an enemy and distrusted because he was not a scamp.

The story of the Russian intelligence department and secret service in the East is closely related to that of the neutral zone, and could easily be expanded to include here much interesting history concerning the Eastern Empire. The activities of the ex-Russian minister to Korea, Mr. Pavloff, and the energies of General Dessino in Shanghai, and Colonel Ogorodnokoff, the commercial and military agents, as well as the diplomatic and consular bodies, were involved in its interesting enterprises, so many of which failed, and all of which reached an unhappy end. Ex-Minister Pavloff, a conspicuous figure in the Far East, after his humiliating departure from Seoul, had established himself in Shanghai and was connected with enterprises for counteracting the antagonism and hostile influence of foreigners in China and of the Chinese, and with schemes for influencing opinion abroad. In connection with these schemes large sums of money were spent, and doubtless without result, for the fortunes of the Eastern Empire seemed to decline more rapidly by reason of them.

With the falling back of the Russian army the controversies about the neutral zone were closed. The Japanese did not require to make use of it, as had the Russian military, and it was not invaded as by Mischenko until the battle of Mukden, and at this time a small Japanese force crossed the river and cleared the vicinity of Hsin-min-t'un of the Russians there. Having in no way interfered with Russian traffic on the railways of the neutral zone, they freely received similar cargo and supplies from Hsin-min-t'un and the Liao River after their occupation of Mukden.

In considering the contentions about the violation of the neutral zone it must be remembered that it was of little or no value to the Japanese, while it was of essential value to the Eastern Empire. General Linievitch and General Kouropatkin maintained military surveillance of it and a military occupation of a part of it, namely, the barracks of the station at Yin-k'ou, a post in Kou-pang-tzü, and the zone between Hsin-min-t'un and the Liao River, while they traversed the entire eastern and northern half of it. On the other hand, the region was not used by the Japanese troops that flanked Kouropatkin at Mukden, and was eliminated as a subject of contention and disposed of by the Japanese, as were most of the questions involved in the war, by disqualifying the Russians in the case.

In the last great battle of the war, that at Mukden, there were executed near Hsin-min-t'un, some of those deeds which provide the most horrible aspect of war. Here was enacted in the most tragic manner the fate of the unfortunate spy. In all armies are men whose business it is to invade the enemy's country in disguise. To the Japanese the task was comparatively easy, since they closely resembled in all their characteristics the natives of Manchuria. But the Russian, at the best, was an absurd and frequently a grotesque caricature of the Manchurian in every respect—in stature, color, physiognomy, bearing and speech. The characteristic Russian was almost the exact opposite of the black-haired, black-eyed Manchurian. He could not eat the native food; he could not write the native language; he could not read it; he could not speak it sufficiently well; and he could not acceptably assume the native dress. But it must be said in praise of the Russian that he had the courage to attempt anything, and certainly no better proof is needed of this than that he calmly essayed to impersonate the Manchurian. It is related

## *The Neutral Zone*

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that one of them, captured spying within the Japanese lines, was of uncommon size and clumsiness, quite at variance with the Manchurian, and with a fair complexion, blue eyes and yellow eyebrows and hair. He was brought before General Kuroki's staff, and the general himself was so amused at his appearance that he burst into a laugh. Instead of ordering him shot, the staff lectured him. They told him that his ignorance and absurdity had saved his life, and that he would be sent a prisoner to Japan instead of being shot as a spy, according to the rules of war, and he received from the toes of the shoes of two Japanese soldiers who had him in charge a humiliating chastisement, which is never visited by disgusted fellow men upon any but the truly elect, and was sent off as a prisoner to one of the beautiful temples in Japan to think it over.

Quite at the other extreme was the terrible fate of Russian spies, whose execution was witnessed by Mr. Straight, a correspondent, on the opposite flank during the battle of Mukden. While trial and clemency are outlawed by the rules of war when one of the enemy is captured in the lines in disguise, the fate of the Russian spies in Chinese costume captured near Hsin-min-t'un seemed especially horrible because they were taken by enlisted Chinese serving in the Japanese army and summarily beheaded during a pause in the march. The unfortunate Russians, who in no respect resembled Chinese, had not even the satisfaction of receiving their quietus from the hands of their chivalrous foe, and the very time and energy necessary for the performance of this duty was noticeably begrudged them by the scoundrelly and cut-throat agents of the Japanese.

The neutral zone was a no man's land, abandoned by both China and the foreign powers to the roving Russian Cossacks and their bandit allies gathered from the headwaters of the Liao and Nonni, and in most cases taken from

the Chinese prisons after arrangement with the native magistrates, as well as to the same type serving with the Japanese. The region owed its tranquility solely to the law-abiding and peaceable nature of the natives. After the battle of Mukden the contention between the belligerents in regard to the neutral zone and the territory of Eastern Mongolia, was abandoned, for by this time the persistent occupation of neutral territory by the Russian army was so notorious, and they had so thoroughly established the precedent, that any further mention of the matter on their part only added bitterness to the almost universal hostility. A post had been from the beginning of the war maintained at Fa-ku-men, and when the war closed both armies with camps on the Mongolian border were scouting far to the west. Both armies drew upon Mongolia for supplies, and as late as July, 1905, the First Army, then under General Kouropatkin, dispatched a thousand troops to Mongolia to bring back cattle. A regiment of mounted Chinese were gathered from the prisons at Petuna, Neng-an-ch'eng, Ta-pa-chia-tzü and other frontier towns and stationed at Chang-chia-t'un, where they were supported by Cossack artillery and regular cavalry. Their business was to scout the right bank of the western Liao River, penetrating far into Mongolia. This garrison was for a time commanded by General Stepanoff, and when peace was declared was under General Barnaul. It is true that Russia, in order to place herself and the Japanese on record before the Chinese Government, made a formal protest after the battle of Mukden of the occupation of Hsin-min-t'un by the Japanese, which was duly combated in a similar manner by the Japanese Government. But General Mischenko, who was stationed on the Mongolian border to protect the Russian right flank and remained there to the end of the war, shunned any criticism of the manner in which the Japanese observed the neutrality of the border. In fact, necessity,

## *The Neutral Zone*

arising from the incompetence of the Mongols in the situation, had established certain practices which seemed to be essential and were at any rate admitted and practiced by both belligerents. The situation, when the Russians established their new position after the battle of Mukden, admitted of an interesting controversy in regard to the location of the Manchurian and Mongolian boundary line. It brought out the interesting fact that the region had not been carefully mapped by the Russians, and after many weeks the Japanese contention, which appears to have been based on the English maps, placed the boundary line farther west than the Russians had contended, was acquiesced in by the Russian army.

The controversy was of some importance to the Russian army because it necessitated crossing and maintaining communications across the deep, muddy, treacherous bed of the Liao River, and in fact, General Mischenko's artillery had to be brought into Mongolia by way of Chang-chia-t'un, eighty miles behind his position.



Russian battle march, "Thunder of Victory," picked up from the battlefield of Liao-yang by the author

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE ROAD TO MUKDEN

FTER the battles of Ta-shih-ch'iao and Liao-yang the location of the Russian frontier garrison at the neutral zone was on the Liao River at the crossing of the Hsin-min-t'un-Mukden road, one hundred miles north of its first station at Yin-k'ou. Cossack patrols paraded Hsin-min-t'un, and lookouts picketed on the roofs of the native houses in the vast kao-liang fields could be seen all along the road to the River Liao, seven miles beyond. Travelers were escorted by Chinese *gendarmes* supplied by the magistrate at Hsin-min-t'un. These were discharged at the river, and having crossed by means of native barges, a Cossack escort guided the traveler to the Russian post. With me, for a companion, was Captain Boyd of the American army, whose hospitality I had enjoyed and who had accompanied me from Hsin-min-t'un this far on my journey. We were received and hospitably entertained for the night by the officers of the staff of General Krastilinsky and separated the following morning, when Captain Boyd returned to Hsin-min-t'un. While we were detained at the Cossack post for the examination of our credentials, Captain Boyd observed with some astonishment the various appointments of the officers' quarters in which we were entertained. It was a Chinese house, new, and had been rendered unusually comfortable, for Manchuria, by commodious beds and luxuries from Mukden and Hsin-min-t'un. He remarked the *eau de cologne*, the dressing tables with their manicure and other luxuries, the writing tables, the rich clothing of the officers. In fact, this

was nothing unusual, but the simplest degree of comfort was, in Manchuria, an idea calculated to strike surprise into any stranger.

At the supper-table we heard for the hundredth time, from one of the officers, that the war had not begun yet. It is around a good board, if ever, that human sympathies are awakened, and one touch of nature is potent and complete. When the meal was finished, without art or intention of adding to these sympathetic influences, the Cossack soldiers were asked to sing. It may be said of the Russians that they all sing, and sing well, and I can say that I have never been more touched by song than on that September night on the banks of the River Liao, when the Cossack soldiers gathered outside the door in the moonlight and rendered in their matchless way the melancholy melodies of the Dnieper and the Don. When I think of these things I feel my callous reason totter, and my sympathies for the moment almost get the better of my judgment in the cause which in all its aspects was the excuse for their presence in defense of the Eastern Empire. It gave me the inspiration for a trend of curious and wonderful reflections that, with the bright sunshine of the day following, lasted all the way to Mukden. Shortly after sun-up I bid the officers good-by and never saw them again.

The Hsin-min-t'un-Mukden road is an immemorial Imperial highway, and was at this time still a busy thoroughfare, although the near proximity of the Japanese army had already rendered it unsafe. As a matter of fact, traffic was not molested here until the following March, although Japanese scouts were now crossing and recrossing it, in spite of Russian patrols. Toward noon I was held up by an infantry patrol, and then passed on. At a Chinese village I had a curious experience, illustrating the attitude of the natives to foreigners. I had dropped a parcel from my

baggage, but had not discovered it until I had ridden a couple of miles, when I returned, to find no traces of it. In the streets of a village where a number of natives were congregated before a street kitchen, I inquired for the package. I discussed the matter elaborately and extensively with them, as is necessary with strangers and especially simple country folk, and I questioned them closely, but all in vain. "Now," said I, "this package has been picked up by some of your neighbors, and if one of you will find it and bring it to Mr. Fulton, the English missionary in Mukden, I will pay you one dollar." The sum was a fabulous one, but it was not sufficient to arouse their cupidity.

"That man," I overheard a number of bystanders remark, "is not a Russian. You see he knows Fu Mu-shi" (Pastor Fulton). "He is a friend of Pastor Fulton." While I was yet only realizing that I had spoken a magic word, a man produced the precious package from the kitchen, and needless to say, I put an extra burnish on Pastor Fulton's reputation by a suitable reward. The farmers had begun to gather their crops, which were apparently undamaged by the presence of military, and the inns and native shops were open and unmolested along the road until near Mukden, where the villages were dismantled and completely desolated by troops, which seemed to be everywhere. The army in its retreat from Liao-yang had fallen entirely back to Mukden. Just east of the P'u River, which at this point runs nearly directly south, hardly a blade of grass was left. The millet had been all carried away; the land was bare as in winter; the trees and buildings were gray with dust; the houses of the natives were empty; and all loose wood in the shape of windows, doors and implements, had been carried off to feed the camp-fires. General Kourapatkin had indeed, after arresting Kuroki's progress on the east of Yen-t'ai, fallen back to the Hun River!

## CHAPTER XXIV

### MUKDEN, THE ARMY BASE

**M**UKDEN was in every way the most important native city in the Eastern Empire, unless perhaps Seoul. It was and remains the seat of the civil and military government of an empire whose system of government bureaus is the original from which was modeled the government organization for all China. It is a city of great wealth and great extent. Seoul was the capital of a nominally sovereign, but poor and decrepit state. Mukden is the capital of a vast, wealthy and prosperous empire. Seoul, as the capital of a peninsula whose control was essential to the Russian plan of Eastern Empire, was invested by foreign plenipotentiaries, missions, and other investments. And Russian utter predominance there must, as a hope of the promoters of the Eastern Empire and their political allies, have been placed in the remote future, though this was doubtless not admitted by them.

The problem of the Eastern Empire as it manifested itself in the Korean capital, was a bitter one. Seoul was the sorest spot in the organism. On the other hand, Mukden was successfully closed by China and by the Eastern Empire to all the rest of the world. It was the center of Manchurian life. Manchuria throbbed with the pulse of Mukden, and the hand of the Eastern Empire held the pulse.

When the tribal states were consolidated, Mukden became the capital of this empire which conquered China, where its dynasty now rules. Mukden itself, now a city of 200,000

people, was left with its original administrative organization of five government boards in care of a "Tartar general." Like Peking, the City of Mukden is surrounded by great walls in dimensions approximating those of the Southern City in Peking. To the inner and original city is added a monument to its wealth and splendor in the form of a secondary city planted around it, and it in turn is protected by an extensive wall of earth, and without this wall, again, are many temples and suburbs, reaching on the south to the sandy bed of the Hun, on the west to the Russian railway, while on the northwest can be seen the green-purple groves of juniper and the liquid-yellow tiled roofs of the Imperial Northern Tombs—a prospect of surpassing beauty and wonder. From the city wall may be seen the Imperial Eastern Tombs crowning the foothills seven miles to the east.

The surrounding country is of uncommon beauty. Besides the lama dagobas there are to the south and to the west tall pagodas, which are landmarks in the region. Between the city and the Imperial Northern Tombs was at that time a grassy plain where little flocks and herds, tended by native shepherd boys, were at all times grazing. Two great roads intersected the plain about the city; the Imperial road from Hsin-min-t'un, and the Imperial road, running north and south, connecting all the great cities in Manchuria. The Hun River, whose name signifies "muddy," comes out of the hills seven miles to the east a clear and crystal stream. It is ascended by a picturesque road, at places cut in the rocks at the base of the cliffs beside the river, and crosses numerous rich valleys crowded with villages and where its mountain tributaries join the main stream. The road to the east passes before the entrance to the Imperial Tombs at Fu-ling (seven miles from Mukden walls), where the yellow roofs rising above the pine groves may be seen for many miles glittering in the bright Manchurian sunlight. As the traveler leaves

this spot a conical mountain rises to view, thirteen miles farther on, which informs him that he is approaching the ancient walled city of Fu-shun. Pagodas rising above the horizon may be seen in the west, in the south, and in the east.

Thirty miles from Mukden on the east the road enters rough hills, where coal crops out on the surface and is in places mined by the natives in the middle of the open road, and continues beyond the head-waters of the Hun to the Yalu. As early as April this road was patrolled by Cos-sacks, and was traversed by a telegraph line. The Tartar general at the same time kept a patrol of native horsemen on this route which supplied him with information concerning most of the adventures of the Eastern Detachment and the advance of the Japanese. These couriers were at the same time made use of by the Russians, thus rendering service to Alexeieff, who was able to appropriate a co-operation of the native administration which could not be refused him, and carried dispatches principally between Ying-p'an and Mukden. The Tartar general also maintained telegraph communication with Mongolia and Chih-li, and it was astonishing the amount of information which he received by telegraph, by courier, and by secret agent. It was not always agreeable to him, and it was especially inconvenient to receive in his yamen, where he was surrounded on all sides by Russian spies and soldiers, an autograph Japanese communication, which occasionally happened. As early as May he was warned by the Japanese that he would be held responsible for any assistance which he gave the Russians.

Mukden, always a great native mart, metropolis and fair, was now even more busy because it was the army base. The shop, the forge, and the open market were yet more animated because of military commerce, and altars blazed with tapers that did not blaze before. Many dusty shops and temples entered upon their renaissance. Its industrial life was reani-

mated by the commerce in grain, harness, pack-saddles, and every kind of stores usable by the army.

The Grand Army was at the gates of this Manchurian capital, and in a situation so discouraging and so disgraceful that the last resource was appealed to. In order to re-enforce the army with the greatest speed, the railway was devoted to the carrying of troops and the army began to feed upon the country, to wear clothing of Chinese manufacture, and to employ wherever possible Chinese implements and vehicles. The manufacture of pack-saddles and gear, fur garments and wadded uniforms of cotton, gave the industries of the city a new impetus and the streets a new appearance.

Under the stimulation of this unnatural traffic, the prices of some commodities advanced to twelve times their former value, and during the winter of occupation the remote regions of the Sungari and northeastern Mongolia were drawn upon for supplies that exercised no appreciable effect upon high prices. Frozen fish, pork, mutton and game, as well as grain, was carted from Kirin and Kuan-ch'eng-tzü. It was not uncommon for two hundred and fifty carts, drawn by nine horses apiece, to arrive in one train. The streets were filled with stalls, shops were opened in temples and dwellings, and not least interesting was the barter about the city gates, the raucous din of armies of crows that inhabited the air, the swirl of dust at times enveloping the walls and rising to high columns from the streets.

But of all the features of this wonderful city, none equaled in interest the array of conglomerate and incongruous races happening under the ægis of the Eastern Empire. Among the normal population were relative numbers of Chinese and Manchus, with an element of Mongolian traders and priests, and Mongolian and French and Russian ecclesiastical envoys, and English, Scotch and Irish missionaries. There was a sprinkling of Koreans, and with the Russian

army came every tribe of Central Asia and Southern Europe, with representatives of every important civilized nation, with here and there a subdued element of the picturesque in the way of an Abyssinian, a Sikh from India, and a negro from America. It was a congress of nationalities, and to make sure that the Japanese were not too numerous, the military police at unequal intervals raided suspected premises and pulled all the queues they could find to see if they were real or false.

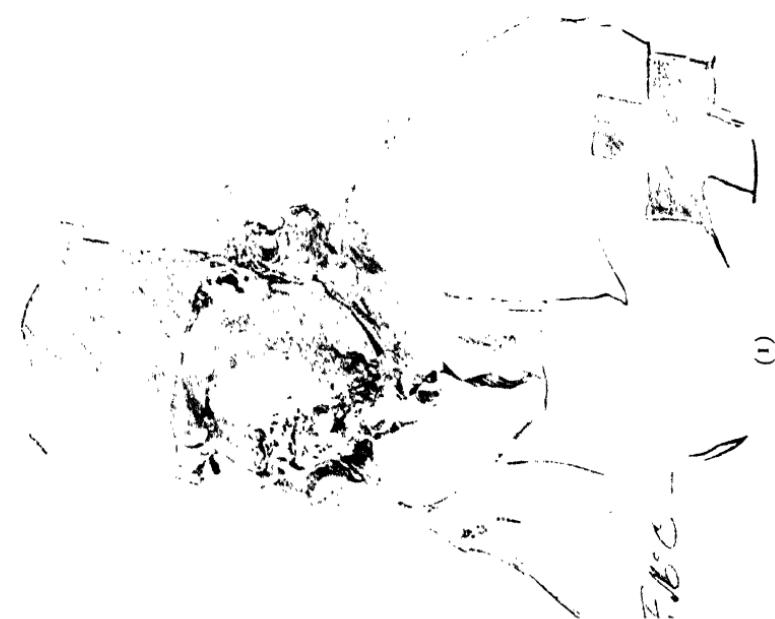
Native authority was vested in the Tartar general, who was both the civil and military power. Russian authority was at first divided, Alexeieff, holding the reigns of civil power in the Eastern Empire, with a control of the naval branch of the military, while Kouropatkin contested with him the authority over the land forces. These two dignitaries found it impossible to inhabit the same locality, but neither of them ever lived in the native city. The Viceroy, who lived in the railway settlement, maintained his control and management of the Tartar general and the civil and military government of Manchuria through a military and civil commissare, who dwelt just in front of the Tartar general's yamen, and maintained guards, spies and police over the native government and throughout the city. There was a Russian gilt-domed church and a post-office in the north suburb—parts of the machinery of the Eastern Empire. Within Mukden walls was the ancient palace of the Manchus—the residence of the Chinese officials—and the government offices. There were no structures or scenes of more unusual interest than the Drum Tower and Bell Tower—with which the main streets of every Chinese city are provided—and the markets and temples. Just outside the earth wall on the west was the great cattle and horse market. Little more than a mile farther west was the railway and the railway settlement, now more busy, perhaps, than was the

settlement at Liao-yang when it was the army base. Like Liao-yang, it was a substantial brick and mortar village without any streets, and, being in a flat plain, was all but inaccessible during the summer rains except by the railway. It began to so much resemble Liao-yang that it was hard to remember the differences in its construction. Instead of the thirteen-story pagoda of Liao-yang, there was in the relatively same position at Mukden a dagoba, which is a lama monument, or tomb. It belonged to a series of four dagobas surrounding Mukden that form a barrier against hostile influences. Between this dagoba and the railway a street was laid out where the army sutlers built little wooden shops, and there were some Chinese houses in which were restaurants.

As at Liao-yang, the station itself was the center of interest; the trains, the buffet, the telegraphs and the barber shop were the center of settlement life. With the arrival of a dignitary, such as Prince Khilkoff or General Kouropatkin, the Viceroy would, after due formality, pay a visit to the dignitary's special car which always stood immediately in front of the station. In order to do this, he took a carriage at his house about five hundred yards away and accompanied by his mounted orderlies and guard would drive up to the rear station entrance. Unlike the other houses of the settlement, the house in which the Viceroy lived was of wood, and of the dimensions of a cottage. The Viceroy's ministers and deputies at the head of the various bureaus of the Eastern Empire were installed in a succession of adjoining buildings, around which at a suitable distance was a cordon of guards and sentries. The line was to be distinguished by the little wooden canopies, at short intervals. The visitor within this line was expected to wear uniform and, generally speaking, only an officer received the consent of the guards to enter. Between this enclosure and the railway track and station



(1)



(1)

) A monk, on duty as a sanitair in the headquarter's hospital. (2) A pope (priest) of the Orthodox Russian Church;



was a broken-bottle zone over which a man could pick his way, and a horse with care might be taken without cutting his feet on the splintered glass—relics of many a wet refreshment while the trains halted. Flanking the Russian Viceroy's little reserve on the south was his special train drawn up on a temporary siding. In it were the offices of the government bureaus; and the Viceroy and his ministers and staff transacted there such business as was left to them to carry on.

In the rains of June, soon after the Viceroy had established himself here, these were the principal objects that attracted the attention of the visitor, for they were the center and core of a sea of mud, in which, as it dried up in the sun and wind, cart animals in trailing cumbersome harness kicked themselves into utter exhaustion and compelled the stalled and broken carts to be abandoned.

Through this scene the military railway trains rolled leisurely along, depositing soldiers who camped on the plain to the west, and then proceeded on to the front with their military cargo. Others hurried to the rear and could be seen for several miles after they had left the station, trailing along in the valley in front of the Imperial Tombs.

The railway was a military institution and was now fulfilling its whole mission. Commerce had been carried on over the line by means of a separate official organization, known as the Commercial Department. Through passenger traffic and shipping had just begun, only to be demolished by the military, for the requirements of the army were even greater than the railroad could meet. The Commercial Department was abandoned and all of the resources of the railway were attached to make a line of communications. Under Prince Khilkoff it became remarkably effective, and, in fact, the most remarkable railway line of communications that ever existed. Its great length rendered it vulnerable to many inimical

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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forces. For a distance of 5,000 versts from the Urals to Port Arthur, it was subject to accident and partial destruction. As a matter of fact it was not interfered with between the Urals and Harbin until the war closed, when it was for a time in the possession of revolutionists. When war broke out a few daring Japanese student patriots made bold attempts, but never succeeded, by the slight damages which they were able to inflict, in disabling it for more than a few hours. In the stormy days of February, 1904, an attempt was made to blow up the Sungari River bridge at Harbin, but failed. As a line of communication for both armies, when the war was well on its way, the railway in Central and Southern Manchuria was not effectually damaged by either belligerent. It was most remarkable as a means of supplying men, stores, and munitions of war to the Russian army. When the war opened it was not yet in fit condition for the heavy work that was to be required of it. In consequence, while the army was being mobilized in Manchuria, the re-laying of the tracks, the construction of sidings, and the building of bridges had to be maintained uninterruptedly. In addition to this, a gap in the railway at Lake Baikal, where the trains were transferred by steamer from one side of the lake to the other, was closed by the construction of a roadbed around the south shore of the lake. The connection was made by tunneling through rock for a greater part of the way. During the winter, when the lake was frozen, temporary tracks were laid on the ice for trains to cross Lake Baikal. This traffic was prolonged so late into spring, on account of military urgency, that the proper precaution was not maintained and a locomotive and part of a train disappeared into the lake.

But by summer the tunnel was completed. The Siberian and Manchurian railways were single-track railways, over which as many as nine trains a day were dispatched from

## *Mukden, the Army Base*

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Moscow with troops for the Eastern Empire. In order to keep these trains moving and to attain any speed it was necessary to construct innumerable sidings, where the trains moving in opposite directions could pass without delay.

Before the battle of Mukden the entire line was equipped with sidings every four versts of its length. It was believed that this railway could never transport to Manchuria and maintain there an army of more than 250,000 men. But at the close of the war the army in the field numbered about 400,000. It was, of course, subsisting upon the country, but, on the other hand, it had re-enforced the garrison at Vladivostok. On the whole, it did so much more than was expected of it as to entitle Prince Khilkoff to especial honor, and he was decorated by his government. The telegraphs also bore a great burden of traffic. During the battle of Mukden they handled about eight thousand telegrams daily.

The region between the settlement and the City of Mukden was an undulating plain dotted with hamlets, all of which were turned to army uses and gave shelter to bakeries, shops, and camps. A clay road, rough and dusty in dry weather, and treacherous and forbidding in wet, led back from the settlement to the city. Just outside the west gate of the mud wall it traversed a depression, where it was overlooked by two rusty old p'ai-lows of the Imperial Yellow Temple. This temple stands to the north of the road and is the center of a cluster of temples shaded by junipers and elms in whose leafy calm in summer a cuckoo kept his solitary watch and could be seen up to the last days at Mukden, when the guns were thundering on the Hun, perched on an old ashen bough, where he called perhaps to a mate that never came, or to some truant acolyte.

There were eight or nine temples and a monastery at this place. In one of them Dr. Butz had his hospital—and some of the other temples later on were requisitioned for

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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Red Cross and commissariat uses. There were many visitors to the shrine in the Imperial Temple itself, which was distinguished from the other temples by its yellow-tiled roof, in the same fashion as were the buildings of the Imperial Tombs and of the palaces within the city. Here the religious ceremonies of the Mongolian lamaists were conducted without interruption throughout the war.

In the monastery was an old lama who set aside a house in which I was to dwell, where could be heard the droning acolytes at their prayers and at their almost interminable chants. Between the trees, where the temple roofs rose in succession, one above another, could be seen the aureate rafters and glittering tiles, and above the trees the lacquered flag-staffs with their yellow banners. From this retreat I was soon aroused by the blare of trumpets, the screech of flageolets, the roll of drums and the tam-tam of cymbals, and hurried out to see a long procession wind slowly up to one of the temples and pass in through the p'ai-low. A trinket was carried past and carefully deposited on the altar within. It was a bridal present. The great Tartar general and viceroy of the Chinese throne, pushed a little more closely to the wall by the Eastern Empire, had taken another and a younger wife to console the sorrows of the "six unhappy years," which he said had distinguished his incumbency at Mukden, and this was one of the wedding presents brought to receive the blessing of the bonze.

On the right of the road is a large suburb just outside the west gate of the mud wall. At this time a squad of Russian infantry moved over the unbaked mire, followed by a brass band playing a popular American tune, and a column of cavalry and infantry with their baggage train, moving on through the gate and through the long streets of the city with great pride and eclat. Inside the gate the street is wide and crooked and lined with shops displaying

foreign merchandise. For more than a mile it winds along until it comes to the semi-lune of the great city wall where are the ironworkers, displaying their implements of all kinds and making nails, knives, shears, swords and plowshares before the eyes of the spectator. Here the road divides to pass around the semi-lune and enter through the gate of the main wall to the inner city. In the distance are the Drum and Bell towers. Passing one of these one comes to a street on the right where are the copper and brass-workers, and which leads to the native restaurants, and then to the palace walls, beyond which is seen disordered architecture, buildings tumbling into ruin, prosperous and also disreputable foliage. Skirting around to the north of this silent enclosure one passes two or three of the famous "fifty-two pools of Mukden." They are black pest-holes of filth. Adjoining it is the Tartar general's yamen and residence. The palace is entered from the south. To the west of it are the boards of Punishment and War. To the east, on the main north and south street, are the Treasury and Civil Department boards. In close connection was the office of the Imperial telegraphs, and dominating the whole was the Eastern Empire's Department of Control, under Alexeieff's agent, Commissare K——.

The commissare's residence, just in front of the south wall, embraced a storied building, and back of it across the street was a Russian military prison, where mutinous soldiers and Chinese spies were imprisoned. The streets in the locality appeared to have a special importance, which was their due on account of the numerous stone lions with tusky looks that are used by the Chinese to dignify the entrance to official places.

For the rest of the city, it is one great stretch of one-storyed tile-roofed houses, all looking alike; the streets glittering with gilded signs and multi-colored merchandise, and

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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filled with traffic by day, abandoned and quiet by night, except for the occasional dash of Cossacks. Toward evening the shopkeepers begin to sweep up the streets in front of their doors, as though to erase each day the traces of the foreigner and invader. Almost at a given moment business closes, the doors are put up—there is a simultaneous great clatter of boards—the natives retire into their houses, and all is soon quiet. Such was Mukden in the summer of 1904.



Cossack saddle, bridle, and cartridge belt

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE GRAND ARMY

MUKDEN reached a high state of excitement with the first news of Kourapatkin's defeat at Liao-yang, and with the arrival of the advance contingents of the retreating army, which moved on through the city in a northerly direction without a stop. North of Yen-t'ai the main body, bearing many of its wounded which the railway had not been able to carry, was delayed by the rains. Without the necessary provisions for crossing the small but deep and angry water courses the columns were delayed for hours, and horsemen only were able to cross by swimming their horses. The main bodies came to a halt between the Hun and the Sha rivers, and finding that the Japanese were not moving against them in force they established their outposts so as to cover the whole valley of the Sha. For the first time in the war, the hospital accommodations were inadequate to the requirements, and the improvised Red Cross trains in which the wounded were conveyed to the rear in some cases stood for two weeks on the sidings at Harbin before they could be evacuated.

A much stronger impetus was given to the Russian army in its retreat from Liao-yang than was commonly supposed in the outside world. The main body reached into Mukden, and some departments of the army there actually retired to Tieh-ling. Many camp-followers moved out and sutlers possessing large stores of goods loaded their possessions in carts to go to Tieh-ling.

After the disaster to the fleet just before the battle of Liao-yang, Viceroy Alexeieff, who had retired to Vladivostok, had not returned. The Eastern Empire had now reached a state of almost overwhelming misfortune. Alexeieff and his party had seen their commercial, naval and political empire vanish. Territorially it was already demolished, and now that the Russian Government was compelled to stand entirely in its stead, the entire machinery built up under Alexeieff was being brushed aside. From the moment the St. Petersburg Government installed Kouropatkin a conflict of authority was established between the commander-in-chief of the Imperial Army and the Government of the Eastern Empire.

In general, the contentions between Alexeieff's Government and the general staff and Kouropatkin, were increased by misfortunes rather than diminished. Alexeieff's Government was aligned with the critical element of the bureaucracy that expected military success, while it was well known that Kouropatkin deprecated the whole course pursued by the Eastern Empire. The national misfortunes had consolidated the military, the bureaucratic and court parties, and with the battle of Liao-yang Alexeieff, still quarreling with the inevitable, was shorn of every dignity except title and office. The small measure of civil authority which he exercised at Mukden while quarreling with the general staff, and his superfluous functions with native authority as a Russian viceroy had no longer any status or weight, and with Mukden occupied as an army base, and with Kouropatkin's arrival at the Hun the whole Government of the Eastern Empire vanished. Bag and baggage of the Viceroy and his officers of state disappeared from the East, and the people of Russia began the serious solution of the unprecedented situation into which that Empire and its connections had involved them.



*M. Barhanoff*  
19<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1919.

*M. Rennencamp*



(1) General Barhanoff (autograph). A Cavalry General whose military training in the old school placed him amongst the class of "academic" soldiers in the Grand Army. (2) General Rennencamp (autograph)

(2)

(1) General Barhanoff (autograph). A Cavalry General whose military training in the old school placed him amongst the class of "academic" soldiers in the Grand Army. (2) General Rennencamp (autograph)



## *The Grand Army*

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It was only at this time that the army itself, which might have been considered to be most intelligent upon the subject of the war, began to realize its difficulties and to carefully consider the military resources at its command and the chances of success. But at the same time an element had steadily developed in the Eastern Empire whose sole consideration was the prospect which the nation might have of withdrawing and ending the war at any reasonable sacrifice. It began to scrutinize the acts of the Government in the minutest particulars. It inquired into the formation and management of the army; it criticised the management of the war; the characters of the commanders; their appointments to command; their strategy. It criticised tactics, and there was nothing, from the throne itself down to the little technicalities of the battlefield that it did not challenge and expose. It might be said that this was the awakening of Russia to the seriousness of the Government's mistakes and blunders.

The Government simplified the management of the war by removing the Viceroy and placing Kouropatkin in a position of eminent authority. General Kouropatkin's situation was such as actually to demand this, and the consent of the Government gave him confidence to reorganize the Manchurian Grand Army and to make that now historic aggressive movement which was the only general offensive military operation against the Japanese on land. The forces collected for this movement, which took the name of the battle of the Sha-ho, represented in its varied elements all that the Grand Army attained to in the whole. These forces, therefore, since they represented the Imperial brute power that had from the beginning lurked behind the mask of the Eastern Empire, and were now fully exposed, seemed to invite the critical inspection of the world.

With the fall of Liao-yang, the first stage of the war was

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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ended. The military plan of Russia had failed. The whole plan of Eastern defense was demolished. Russia was in the air, and the situation was so unfavorable that it called for heroic remedy. The desperation of the Russian military may be judged from the fact that Kouropatkin resolved to advance. After all that had happened the world cannot be blamed for receiving this novel idea with amazement, but the world may be assured that the army itself received it with surprise. It is interesting, therefore, to examine in detail the instrument with which this feat was to be performed.

The army as an organized military body had such alien elements as only the conglomerate empire from which it was drawn and the empires to which it aspired could afford. It had a sprinkling of Koreans; some of them were "generals," but all of them might with truth be called interpreters or guides and spies.

It was natural that the natives, even in Manchuria, should find their way into Russian service. Liberal pay can even persuade the Chinese to engage in military service, though it may be said, with more truth of the Chinese than perhaps of any other race, that the class who may be persuaded to fight other people's battles are attracted more by the rewards of blackmail and plunder than by the prospects of honest pay. The Chinese in the Russian army took service as an interpreter, in which his operations were practically unlimited for illegitimate gain; as a scout, in which service he could combine both plunder and blackmail; and as a teamster. As an interpreter his service was purely voluntary, but as a teamster he had no choice if he owned his own animals and cart, for they were generally commandeered, either directly or by coercion through the native officials.

To a certain extent the Chinese horsemen, who were generally designated as robbers, were volunteers, but as a rule

they were prisoners under sentence of death, farmed out to the Russian military by native magistrates. In organized bodies, carrying out their operations, they were often mistaken for Japanese, or for robbers in the employ of the Japanese, and were killed by soldiers of their own side. They were generally in charge of a Russian officer, who was constantly occupied with the problem of saving his own life from the Japanese, from the robbers themselves, and from his own people. Near O-mo-so, toward the close of the war, a part of a squadron of enlisted Chinese mutinied and besieged their commander in a native enclosure where he had camped for the night. After a desperate fight he was relieved, but had not an unexpected patrol appeared at the proper moment he must have been overwhelmed. When the time came, on the declaration of peace, to disband these elements, a large part of them escaped with their arms and resumed their occupation as outlaws.

The Russian army was pursued by a small army of Russian merchants, mostly Jews, whose services were of great value, and by an unknown number of speculators who were able, by bribery of military officials, to acquire forage and stores with which they traded upon the distresses of whoever might be the victims of a famine which they had helped to create. But as a body their retribution was complete, for their hoardings generally either passed into the enemy's lines or were destroyed by the army in its retreats. They were then without recourse, for while in other countries government is liable to indemnities, their despotic system outlawed all affairs concerning these adventures. It was not strange that the army put forward by a people moving in the mediæval manner in which Russia was approaching the Yellow Sea; in an army invoked by a government of conspirators of the Eastern Empire, whose whole enterprise was one of overreaching adventure, that the element of romance was the

most prominent characteristic. In the ranks of the Grand Army were adventurers of nearly every European country. I am not aware that there were any Scandinavians or Italians in its voluntary military service, but in the initial stages of the war Britons were in its employ. Its array of alien soldiers of fortune distinguished it among modern armies. The name of Prince Murat conjures up the golden age of military romance—the campaigns of Napoleon, the inspiration of this and every other army, with which histories the Russians were saturated; the name of Prince Jimez, son to the Pretender of the Spanish throne, notorious in the present day annals of adventures of discommoded nobility; Bendiff, of the Bulgarian army, an ex-officer of the War Department, and an exile from his native land, was a colonel of a regiment of Cossacks notorious as that which in 1900 had driven several thousand Chinese into the Amur River at Blagovetschensk, where they perished either from drowning or from the rifle fire of the Cossacks; Lieutenant Bertin, a French Catholic zealot, officer in the Arab cavalry of France, was a centurian in the Mongol Cossacks and lost his life in a charge upon Japanese outposts during Mischenko's raid to Yin-k'ou; all these and many others.

Bertin seemed to have allied himself for religious reasons upon the side of Russia. All the great passions—those of race, civilization, religion, politics, ambition, and the love of adventure, had an element to represent them. As if this aggregation of romantic elements were not complete and lacked some distinguishing touch, Emperor William dispatched Prince Leopold of Prussia to be the guest of the Manchurian Grand Army at the headquarters of the commander-in-chief. Military traffic was arrested so that he might be conveyed by special train over the Siberian and Manchurian railways. The army was deprived of 1,500 soldiers so that he might visit it. He was interned for

## *The Grand Army*

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several weeks at Ko-chia-tien, General Linievitch's headquarters, after the battle of Mukden, where he beguiled his leisure moments, according to spectators, with pillow-fights and champagne parties, and excited the distrust of the army regarding his mission. He dispatched voluminous reports prepared by his secretaries and carried by couriers to his Emperor, arousing the army's suspicions. When the armistice was declared and open hostilities ceased, he visited the front, and upon the eve of demobilization, when peace was signed, he retired.

A picture of the Russian Grand Army in Manchuria would not be complete without a description of the Russian correspondent. For a country without a press, so to speak, Russia had an astonishing number of newspaper representatives and writers. Among them were to be found some of the distinguished writers of Russia, though their names may not be known outside of their native land. But the element most conspicuous, however, were the journalistic aspirants, the combined product of the Government and of the revolutionary aspirations of the people. For the most part they were in Government service, and it went without saying that they bore the bureaucratic approval, else they would not have been within the theater of war. According to an observer well acquainted with these men, the typical Russian journalist was in the first instance a man who donned a military cap, which got him saluted by the soldiers. He then put on a property sword that wouldn't draw, and if he attained to any measure of even temporary prosperity he maintained some woman as his mistress. He talked of losing horses shot under him, told tragic stories of adventures where bullets grazed his horse's nose, and he could, with his mouth, exactly imitate all the sounds of battle, from the soft hiss of bullets and the ring of shrapnel to the roar and clangor and explosion of the heaviest shells.

General Kouropatkin was about to proclaim the vengeance of Muscovy upon Japan, and it was with such an army as only Russia through all the history of the world has possessed the resources to show that he was about to try to make good his threat. The Manchurian Grand Army was so completely representative of the races and tribes of Europe and Asia as to be incomparable, and it baffles description. As its rank and file represented the people of every state and bailiwick, and as its leaders were the representatives or legatees of nearly every European and Asian military reputation, the army as a whole represented every fashion in dress and military art since the discovery of gunpowder.

In firearms its equipment was nearly uniform. There was none finer in the world; but in accouterments and dress the human elements were assignable to every era of the north temperate zone. Between the skin boots, the skin coat, and skin hat of the Tungus and Buriat on the Amur, and the khaki roundabouts of the German-Russians from the Baltic, were included some relic of every article of adornment and clothing in the history of man.

They represented all religions and, while subject to the Czar, nearly all forms of government and customs of organized society. The Caucasians had not altered their military costumes for four hundred years, and the dress of some of the men of the Siberian contingents seemed to be only an extension of the costumes of the Stone Age.

The armament was uniform because it was supplied by the state, but dress was a personal consideration in which the heterogeneous elements would not submit to be influenced. Russian military regulations defaulted when it came to both dress and tactics, and the history of the war shows the modernization of the army to have been a failure. There were in the end fully 400,000 soldiers in the Eastern Empire, representing nearly every military district of both European and

## *The Grand Army*

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Asian Russia. They differed in speech, and in many cases they could not communicate with each other by either written or spoken language—native or foreign. It occasionally happened that two soldiers of the Czar's army had no means of communication, except a few words of Chinese which they had learned since arriving in Manchuria. But the army had not completed its variety of dress until large quantities of Chinese garments had been adopted, and then it was not uncommon to hear one Russian ask another, "Are you a Chinese?" During the great battles the common soldiers arrested the officers of neighboring contingents for Japanese.

Appearances were in every respect most striking to the Anglo-Saxon. The lower class of Russian was badly dressed, especially the soldier. His modern clothes were often less becoming than his ancient ones, and generally had nothing in common with his anatomy, and seemed to debase rather than ennoble him as a man. Perhaps the most picturesque and in nearly every way impracticable soldiers of the Grand Army were the Caucasians. They resembled those fine birds that are attractive and interesting to behold, but which have no general utility and whose existence, therefore, is something of a wonder. In a special manner, not applying to the army in general, their military career in Manchuria was a failure.

But in appearance off the battlefield, they were everything. I remember to have been greatly impressed on several occasions at the railway station at Mukden by a Caucasian whom I saw parading the platform there. His hair was a glossy black, and his brown goatskin cap was matched in color by his rich red-brown whiskers, faultlessly barbered, and he wore a rich home-spun surtout reaching to his spurs of the color of the deep wine-red tints of autumn. His hands were faultlessly manicured; he wore a handsome Damascened

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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sword, poniard, and ornamental cartridges with silver mountings. He was magnificent, awe-inspiring, and as he swaggered up and down the platform I thought that at least he ~~was~~ a colonel of cavalry; he was certainly a prince, and had he been ten years older I would readily have assigned him to a brigade of Cossacks such as was commanded by Prince Orbeliani. He was not even a soldier. I found him, some months later, to be the proprietor of a third-rate hotel in one of the vilest streets of Harbin, where the worst music in all Manchuria was to be heard of an evening, and where, when I found him, he was the mediator in a quarrel between two of his countrymen, equally well dressed, equally magnificent, but between whose ages there was a difference of at least thirty years.

Their military appearance when on parade possessed a kind of splendor which we perceive among barbarians. Their standards were brilliant and gorgeous. They employed every brilliant color of raiment, and they moved with a picturesque ease and swagger. They were the most conspicuous Oriental element in the whole army.

As soldiers the Caucasian Cossacks were pernicious, but could hardly be said to be dangerous. According to the other elements of the army, they excelled in barbarities. More than any other element they got a bad name for robbery and for murder. The army charged them with many outrages against the laws of civilized warfare, and it was asserted that owing to their murder of the Japanese wounded and prisoners and the robbing of the wounded and dead, that the Japanese were compelled to wage a war of extermination against them, and that they changed their garb to that of the regular Cossacks to elude this vengeance. General Kouropatkin in his Orders of the Day repeatedly admonished the army to observe humanity in its treatment of Japanese killed and wounded, and it was understood that these admoni-

nitions were inspired by the barbarities of the Caucasians. In his appeal to the army he cited the humane practices of the enemy.

The Caucasian Cossacks frequently threatened mutiny. One whole squadron mutinied and refused to fight. They gave as a reason that they could not see the enemy, and they would not fight bullets that fell out of the sky. The leaders were sentenced to death, the squadron was disbanded and it was intended to send the men in a body to their homes in disgrace, but General Kouropatkin is said to have suspended the execution of the leaders and to have distributed the squadron among the other troops, placing them where they would always be in the front. Their apprehension of the dangers of firearms in the hands of the enemy deserves attention. Although the long-range, rapid-fire rifle has revolutionized warfare, it is not in strictly recent times that this has taken place, and it is doubtful if in any other civilized country of the world there is to be found a body of soldiers going into battle without knowing the existence of, and counting the cost of ignoring, the hidden foe.

The cavalry branch of the army was almost wholly Cossacks. There was a dragoon regiment and a few hussars, but the whole cavalry arm were virtually mounted peasants, and except for their ability to ride, were possessed of no special cavalry qualifications. As couriers they were excellent, but as scouts they showed no superiority to the mounted infantry, and throughout the whole course of the war never executed any important cavalry operations. The artillery may be said to have been a special branch of the army, and the war, since it surpassed all other wars in artillery fighting, could properly be called an artillery war. As for the infantry, it may be said, like the cavalry, to have been an assemblage of unintelligent peasants, more or less trained in an obsolete mediæval system of warfare, who never executed any

successful movements against the enemy, but who supplemented the work of the artillery by remaining in their line of defense.

The artillery branch of the army deserves especial notice. It was equipped with the standard field-gun, which was superior in rapidity of fire and in range to the Arasaka gun, which was the standard field-piece of the Japanese army. In the whole matter of field artillery the Japanese were at a disadvantage. At the beginning of the war their "shimose" shell had a high moral value, but this was lost when the Russian army discovered that its power of execution was confined to the immediate spot where it struck and the demoralizing effect of the great noise which it made was diminished. Owing to the recoil of the Russian field-gun the rapidity of fire was diminished, while the natural clumsiness of the Russian operated to make his weapon less effective. But it was capable of great accuracy at a range of two to three miles, while the Japanese were obliged to bring their field-piece within two miles or less to obtain an equal degree of execution.

There was but one battle north of Nan-shan where the Japanese had any field-pieces of superior power. In the battle of Mukden their Port Arthur siege guns excelled in power, but not in range, the siege guns of the Russians, but were absurdly inferior in numbers. The standard field-gun of the artillery was supplemented by mountain guns and by howitzers and mortars, and in the last great battle of the war siege guns, of which the Russians had the old-style short, six-inch, high carriage gun, and later added a long five-inch gun with a range of from eight to eleven versts. They obtained also a few new field-guns with a shield, and an improved mountain gun superior to any they had previously employed. Their artillery was not excelled by the artillery equipment of any army, and under certain of their com-

manders reached a state of efficiency creditable to the Russian military.

The method of the Russian artillery was interesting. It followed the doctrine laid down after the Crimean and Russo-Turkish wars. "The enemy is destroyed," said the officers, "by projectiles en masse, covering all the enemy's zone." From the first the Japanese doctrine seemed to be to fire at a special target, at which they had been surprisingly successful, even from the very first battles at Ch-iu-lien-ch'eng and Wa-fang-tien, where Russian batteries were silenced in intervals of a few minutes. The Russians, on the contrary, fired great quantities of projectiles, maintaining direction and range, but generally devoting themselves to some zone and firing away at it until ordered to cease.

Unlike the cavalry and infantry branches of the army, the artillery was not chargeable with any essential military defect. But it happened that on account of the defects in their ammunition, that the artillerists wrought much havoc among their own soldiers. A certain percentage of the standard field-gun ammunition exploded prematurely after leaving the gun, working havoc among and demoralizing the infantry and other troops in front, over which the artillery was firing. At the battle about to be described the shells of one battery exploded in another battery, killing and wounding some of the men and creating the impression in the unfortunate battery that it was being fired on by its own artillery.

Of the various members of an army the infantry branch is most numerous and, therefore, most important. On the battlefield of Mukden, Kouropatkin reiterated the immemorial tribute to the infantry. He told them that it was upon them that the nation relied for victory. In the annals of the infantry is written the history of wars and the progress of nations. The peculiar quality of the Russian infantry, as so often expressed, was its power in defense. The Rus-

sian infantryman had in a commendable degree the ability to resist, while it was a phenomena of his character, though a very doubtful military virtue, that when it became necessary to give up his position he retired doggedly.

The history of the war shows the Russians to have been incompetent in the offensive, and it seems to have been a principle guiding Kourapatkin that the safety of his soldiers lay in their remaining in their field-works. The fact that he distrusted his commanders outside of the positions seems conclusively shown in the fight at Yen-t'ai mines, in the battle of San-chia-p'u and the battle of Mukden. His distrust seems to be justified by the great losses sustained by all branches of the army when they attempted the initiative. Many circumstantial reports testified to the incompetency of the infantry in maneuver. They lost contact with the rest of the line and fired upon each other, and in the crises of some of their battles they have assigned this as one of the causes of their defeat.

One of the differences between the Japanese and Russian troops was the ability to maneuver. The Japanese could be seen to advance in order, closing up gaps in their line and invading the enemy's field. When attacked they were alert and expectant, promptly took cover and prepared to receive the enemy. On the contrary, Russian troops generally lost confidence when the attack began, were slow to detect the enemy, and as a rule withdrew according to their peculiar military reasoning, refusing to be hurried, and losing large numbers by their doggedness. Instead of activity they seemed to be always waiting for other troops to come up, and when they fell back it was to rendezvous and herd with other troops in exposed places.

In an army with a peasant or serf at the bottom, and a bureaucrat or noble at the top, there was of course the widest range of intelligence. An army is essentially but an organ-

ized mob. There was the greatest difference among recruits. The Poles were highly intelligent, but they were not dependable. Many of them were revolutionists. They refused in some cases to fire on the Japanese, and instead fired in the air, and when convenient to do so many of them passed into the Japanese lines and became willing prisoners. They regarded themselves as victims of the Government, and being opposed to war as a people and to the extension of the conspiracies of the bureaucracy they evaded military service by the only course possible to them.

The Siberian common soldier was unlettered, undisciplined, hardly less intelligent and, for a Russian, an excellent fighter. The peasant soldier from Little Russia was less intelligent than the Pole, but may be taken as the example of the docile, reliable Russian soldier. The people of the Caucasus, boasting of their nationality, constituted the unruly element. The foreigners, such as the Finns, serving in the Russian army, were like those prisoners of old, condemned to service in galleys. They were prisoners and their service was extorted. They were a part of the revolutionary element, which was large and included among its sympathizers many persons of rank and even nobles. In fact, this element taken as an unknown quantity, if the whole truth were known, might largely account for General Kourapatkin's distrust of the army and his fear of maneuvering it on the battlefield.

It ought to be mentioned that Siberians, though discredited as undisciplined by the regular army, were about the best fighting men. Their interest in the war was a greater and more intelligent one than the interest of any other element of the army. Many of them had seen service in Manchuria and Chih-li in 1900, and the campaign—which to the European Russians had no reason of being—had to them a certain meaning. They knew that in certain ways its success or failure affected Siberia, and they knew what the idea of

the Eastern Empire was. Many of them were revolutionists, but they looked to the prosperity of the Eastern Empire to cure their ills. The propaganda of the government press, appealing to the cupidity of Russians as a means of saving their seizure of Manchuria, was not necessary to the Siberians. They were looking forward to an escape by the Pacific from the despotism of the Baltic.

The Jews were a conspicuous and unnatural element in the Manchurian Grand Army. They were the objects of general contumely and the victims of a national prejudice. They were not as a rule to be found among military officers, but as physicians they served in the Red Cross, and were impressed as common soldiers into the ranks.

I do not know of any cases of cowardice on the part of Jews in the army. I have seen them behave with marked coolness and presence of mind in great danger. As a soldier, his conduct in the mind of the writer is exactly illustrated by the following stories: In the fighting south of Liao-yang General Alexeieff, while passing from one part of the battlefield to the other, met four men who had turned their shelter tent into a litter and, with their rifles locked, according to the method in the Russian army for making a litter, were carrying a comrade, who, to all appearances, was wounded. One glance at the men showed the general that they were all Jews, so he inquired: "Where is that man wounded?" There was no response to this inquiry, so the general ordered the litter put down. When he did so the man crawled out and proved as sound as the other four. They had conspired to escape duty, but the general could only send them back where they were badly needed. In the Eastern Detachment, when General Keller was visiting his left flank, he saw several Jews come out of the kao-liang. He stopped and inquired of them, "What are you doing in there?" "We live in the kao-liang, High-born one," they replied.

"And why do you live in there?" asked the general.

"Because, High-born one, you are on one side of us and General Rennencamp is on the other, so there is no danger!"

A great deal might be written on the genius of the Baltic provinces in the war. The German-Russians were the methodists of the army, and they furnished most of the technical knowledge used in the construction of their defense positions. Many of their best engineers were German-Russians, and the names of Stackelberg, Gripenberg, Kaulbars, Rennencamp, Gerngrossz, Meyendorf, and Bilderling, readily testified to the German-Russian influence.

In a scheme of government so vast and unwieldy as the Russian it was natural to expect a formidable element of the incongruous. The army was constantly pointing out that this and that general was not a real general, but merely a "school" general, and would name over their real generals, thus: Mischenko, Zarubaeff, Rennencamp, Zerpitsky, Danieloff, Muhloff, etc. Some seemed more like chiefs or sachems than like generals. This was true of Mischenko. Men like Rennencamp and Mischenko were *bon chefs par excellence*.

By autumn there were nearly one hundred and fifty generals in the theater of war, which was a number greatly in excess of the requirements. But there were among the officers, as is to be found in all military systems, many whose rank was entirely formulary. They were not soldiers, though many of them retained the impression until the very close of the war that they were about to receive a company or a regiment or a division, as the case might be. Privileged persons swarmed about the army base with their hangers-on and understrappers, and the impression which they created was that of the immense and unwieldy machinery that belongs to such a government. They posed as advisers and helpers and regarded themselves as entitled to confidence and

credit as patriots. Some of them, though their economic value to the army might be questioned, yet rendered certain services in their peculiar way. Among them was R—, of the Czar's Equerry, who equipped a Red Cross contingent and maintained it under his own direction in the field. He received the complimentary title of "general." He had himself photographed in the following manner: He first drew up his small outfit of horses and litters, making a suitable background display. He then posed a prostrate soldier in the foreground. He was now ready to add the principal elements. He himself kneeled in a tragic manner on one knee and with his left hand placed over the reclining soldier's heart, he supported in his right a Red Cross standard, while at his side stood an attendant with a bottle. A photograph made of this scene was printed in one of the principal Russian illustrated papers.

Among other aids to woo military success offered by enthusiasts were the field balloons. There seemed to be quite a contagion among patriots to help the army to get sight of the enemy. Little balloons and big balloons were exhibited near the railway station at Mukden to advertise the enterprise, and they contributed to the edification of an immense international population. A telescope was brought which "would reveal a man on horseback eighteen miles away, and a flagstaff twenty-two miles distant." One may easily fancy some kind-hearted and well-meaning patriot, his honest head buzzing with his benevolent idea, catching up in his proud frenzy one of these amusing and serviceable scientific machines of many diameters, and conquering the wild Siberian plains and the officials, hastening by rail and landing flushed, modest, confident and a little short of wind, at the very front, to exclaim with generous humility, "There, Mr. Kourapatkin, look through that."

Something of what the responsibilities of a commander-in-

chief are may be understood by an appreciation of such an array of diverse and often antagonistic elements. In Manchuria they constituted a vast and bewildering scene which, to show that it was the handiwork of frail man, needed only the ecclesiastical element. Pervading all and hardly less picturesque than the Caucasian contingent was the Army of the Church. The priests were dressed in plain cassocks, wore their hair long, and in their various ornaments and insignia seemed to represent in a greater *dégree* than did the military the mystery and power of their great potentate. Greater than the glamour of the military was the religious and ecclesiastical machinery with which the orthodox church ministered to the army. In it, more than in the congregated thousands of accoutered men, was embodied Russia. The Eastern Empire, failing in its own strength, invoked its aid. Russia, failing in her own strength, invoked its aid. The army made way for it. Its shrines and banners were planted on the positions. Its holy emblems were carried to the firing line. The line opened to receive them. The sacred relics of the mother churches at Moscow and other ancient cities in Russia were assembled to carry God into the battlefield and to carry His vengeance to the enemy. The militant priesthood mounted horses and escorted the Cossacks to their raids. On one occasion such an expedition halted at intervals in its march around the flank of the enemy to hold religious services. Four times in its advance the column halted, and the priests, loaded with their insignia of religious office, carried sacred ikons along the lines for the soldiers to kiss. In the desperation of the situation before Mukden, the commander-in-chief carried out conscientiously the onerous official programme of devotion, provided by the Government and entailed upon officials. In every camp were its altars. On every grave its emblems. At dawn could be heard the morning mass; at the eating hour the chant around

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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the common board; at dusk the evening hymn, which, heard from every direction of the battle-ground, was like a chorus from some great invisible choir.

This was the army of the offensive. It was such an army that was to be the aggressor.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE BATTLE OF THE SHA-HO

THE region east and west at the Sha River, in which the Russian army found itself after the battle of Liao-yang, was not unlike that of every position at which it had fought since leaving K'ai-chou. The railway still formed the center and followed the line dividing the hill country on the east from the great plain leading off to the west. The trend of streams rising in the eastern mountains was still to the west. As at the Liao-yang position there was a nest of mountains on the extreme east, with a "Ta-ling" or Great Pass barring the road to the army base.

Kouropatkin divided the forces into two main armies. General Stackelberg was given command of the Eastern Army, which was comprised of Rennencamp's division, and the First, Second, and third Army corps, and General Samsonoff's small cavalry division. General Mischenko, with a mixed force such as he had from the beginning commanded, guarded a gap in the line in the foothills between the Eastern Army and the Fourth Corps, which was directly under Kouropatkin's control at a point on the Sha River called Er-ta-kou, and which was to become famous along with Pootiloff and Novogorod in the battle of Mukden. It was distinguished by a pagoda which was a landmark visible for forty miles. The hill upon which it stood was not so high as the famous Shou-shan at Liao-yang, but from it was clearly visible the whole position of the Japanese army in the plain, the station of Yen-t'ai, the City of Liao-yang with its famous pagoda, and Shou-shan behind. It was clearly

to be seen why Kouropatkin selected this point of observation and vantage, from where he in person directed the Fourth Corps. With the outposts along the Sha, the Fourth Corps rested behind the hill Kuan-shan four versts to the rear. Then came the Western Army under General Bilderling. First was the Tenth Corps, commanded by General Sluchevsky, which lay across the Yalu or Imperial road connecting with the Seventeenth Corps (General Bilderling's own corps) at the railway. After the battle opened, the Sixth Corps, which had just arrived, was moved down to support the Seventeenth on its right, displacing the Fifth Corps, which was moved a little farther to the right and to the rear and held in reserve. General Kossakovsky with a mixed cavalry force guarded the right flank.

In all there were eight army corps and Rennencamp's and Kossakovsky's cavalry detachments or divisions.

In strength the Grand Army was not inferior when the battle of the Sha River opened to its strength at Liao-yang. Kouropatkin had evidently planned his famous advance policy to take effect when he should have recovered his original military strength. It marked the beginning of the second stage of the war and showed clearly the change of feeling which the defeat at Liao-yang had brought about in Russia. The defensive was to be abandoned. Kouropatkin was under pressure to act quickly. His bold attempt to recover his military equilibrium was that of a commander who apparently feels himself obliged to prove that his plan of war has not in reality defaulted and that his opportunity has not entirely escaped him. He had now had five weeks in which to re-enforce his army from Europe. It was the most powerful Russian force that had ever appeared east of the Urals. Though it cannot be said to have given him any great confidence on account of its strength, he was at any rate inspired by the desperation of his situation, which



Retreat of the infantry of the 17th Corps along the railway on October 12th



## *The Battle of the Sha-ho*

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had almost reached a state of disgrace. In these circumstances he issued the following proclamation, which seems to indicate that he regarded the destiny of the Eastern Empire as still within the control of the Imperial Grand Army:

“ More than seven months ago the enemy treacherously fell upon us at Port Arthur before war had been declared. Since then by land and sea the Russian troops have performed many heroic deeds of which the Fatherland may be justly proud. The enemy, however, is not only not overthrown, but in his arrogance continues to dream of complete victory. The troops of the Manchurian army, in unvarying good spirits, have hitherto not been numerically strong enough to defeat the Japanese army. Much time is necessary for overcoming all difficulties and strengthening the active army so as to enable it to accomplish with complete success the arduous but honorable task imposed upon it. It is for this reason that, in spite of the repeated repulse of the attacks of the Japanese upon our positions at Ta-shih-ch’iao, Lian-dian-san (Liang-chi-shan?), and Liao-yang, I did not consider the time to have arrived to take advantage of these successes to begin a forward movement and I, therefore, gave the order to retreat. You left the positions you so heroically defended, covered with piles of the enemy’s dead, without allowing yourselves to be disturbed by the foe, and in preparedness for a fresh fight, after five days’ battle at Liao-yang, you retired on the new positions previously prepared.

“ After successfully defending all advanced and main positions you withdrew to Mukden under the most difficult conditions. Attacked by General Kuroki’s army, you marched through almost impassable mud, fighting throughout the day and extricating the guns and carts with your hands at night, and returned to Mukden without abandoning a single gun, prisoner, or wounded man, and with the baggage train entirely intact. I ordered the retreat with a sorrowful heart, but with unshaken confidence that it was necessary in order to gain a complete and decisive victory over the enemy when the time came. The Emperor has assigned for the conflict with Japan forces sufficient to assure us victory. All the difficulties of transporting these forces

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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over a distance of 10,000 versts (6,666 miles) are being overcome in a spirit of self-sacrifice, and with indomitable energy and skill by Russian men of every branch and rank of service, and every social position to whom has been entrusted this work, which for difficulty is unprecedented in the history of warfare. In the course of seven months hundreds of thousands of men, tens of thousands of horses and carts, and millions of poods of stores have been coming uninterruptedly by rail from European Russia and Siberia to Manchuria. If the regiments which have already been sent out prove to be insufficient, fresh troops will arrive, for the inflexible wish of the Emperor that we should vanquish the foe will be inflexibly fulfilled.

"Hitherto the enemy in operating has relied on his great forces and, disposing his armies so as to surround us, has chosen as he deemed fit his time for attack; but now the moment to go and meet the enemy, for which the whole army has been longing, has come, and the time has arrived for us to compel the Japanese to do our will, for the forces of the Manchurian army are strong enough to begin the forward movement. Nevertheless you must unceasingly be mindful of the victory to be gained over our strong and gallant foe. In addition to numerical strength, in all commands, from the lowest to the highest, a firm determination must prevail to gain the victory, whatever be the sacrifices necessary to this end. Bear in mind the importance of victory to Russia, and, above all, remember how necessary victory is the more speedily to relieve our brothers at Port Arthur, who for seven months have heroically maintained the defence of the fortress entrusted to their care.

"Our army, strong in its union with the Tsar and all Russia, performed great deeds of heroism for the Fatherland in all our wars, and gained for itself well-merited renown amongst all nations. Think at every hour of the defence of Russia's dignity and rights in the Far East, which has been entrusted to you by the wish of the Emperor. Think at every hour that to you the defence of the honor and fame of the whole Russian army has been confided. The illustrious head of the Russian land, together with the whole of Russia, prays for you and blesses you for your heroic deeds. Strengthened by this prayer and imbued with the consciousness of the importance

## *The Battle of the Sha-ho*

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of the task that has fallen to us, we must go forward fearlessly with a firm determination to do our duty to the end without sparing our lives. The will of God be with us all!"

The army now began to advance, not yet from the Sha-ho, because there were troops occupying the hills on the north bank of the Hun River, twenty miles in the rear, that had to be brought up. These were the First Siberian Corps at Fu-ling and the Third Siberian Corps at Fu-shun, with a force also at Ying-p'an.

The Japanese had established their position on a line running nearly east and west about half-way between Yen-t'ai and the Sha River. It was in fact exactly parallel to the branch railway connecting Yen-t'ai with the Yen-t'ai mines. The order of their forces remained the same as at Liao-yang; Kuroki was on the east, Oku on the west, and Nodzu in the center. As the Russian army advanced the Japanese fell back in the direction of this position. General Samsonoff, with cavalry, made a reconnaissance in force on the left of the Eastern Army, fighting with the Japanese advance posts during the day and night of the twenty-ninth of September, when he retired.

On October 1st the Russian military appropriated the Imperial Chinese telegraph and telephone line to Hsin-min-t'un to prevent messages reaching the border, and for the use of the army.

Although the Russian troops from the Hun began moving on the fourth of October, and reached the Sha-ho line of defense on the sixth, the armies did not come into battle until the ninth. The Eastern Army moved south through the mountains; the main body, composed of the First, Third and Second corps, crossed the upper part of the Sha River and moved in the direction of Pen-shi-hu. The Second Army, making a simultaneous advance, had not reached so

far south, when, on the tenth the battle was well under way, and the Japanese were virtually in their defenses.

As waged by the Russians, this battle may be divided into three parts: First, the battle of the main body of the Western Army in the vicinity of Tou-san-p'u west of the railway, where the equivalent of two regiments were lost, virtually deciding the issue of the battle; second, the battle of the main body of the Eastern Army, fought against an impregnable position in the mountains where the Japanese held, with a relatively small force, three-fourths of the Eastern Army while they defeated the Western Army in the plain; and third, the artillery battle on the railway and the Yalu or Imperial road east of and near to the railway.

Beginning on the ninth of October the fighting was continued for eight days. In magnitude it was about that of Gravelotte. According to the *Manchurian Army Vestnik*, which was the official army newspaper, there were 775 officers and 27,887 privates wounded, and 168 officers and 3,224 privates sick between October 8th and 21st, which partially represented the losses during the main action, but did not include the casualties in reconnoissances preceding the battle; they are the Red Cross returns and neither do they account for the killed, so that the total killed and disabled and lost were not less than 38,000. In the attack on the Japanese position defended by Kuroki, the main body of the Eastern Army assailed a precipitous mountain wall where nearly 5,000 men were lost without any other result. The Fourth Corps was unable to defend the right flank where General Nodzu, having beaten back the Tenth Corps, was attacking its own flank. The forces under General Bilderling were unable to hold their line in the plain. With his Seventeenth Corps he held the railway, but on the twelfth of October the Tenth Corps on the left and the Sixth Corps on the right had been pushed back so far that his line was like the letter "S."

## *The Battle of the Sha-ho*

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The Seventeenth Corps was subjected to enfilading fire on two sides and General Bilderling informed the commander-in-chief in the morning that he was unable to advance. During the day the two Ingermanland regiments, the Ninth and Tenth from Caluga, were virtually destroyed below Tou-san-p'u, where they were caught on two little peninsulas between the Sha River and two of its tributaries. The Japanese appear to have ascended the beds of the streams, where they were able to place the two regiments under cross-fire. The result was almost a massacre and the Sixth Corps fell back several miles. The Seventeenth Corps, with its strong artillery was left to sustain the line, but its own losses for the day were about five thousand men.

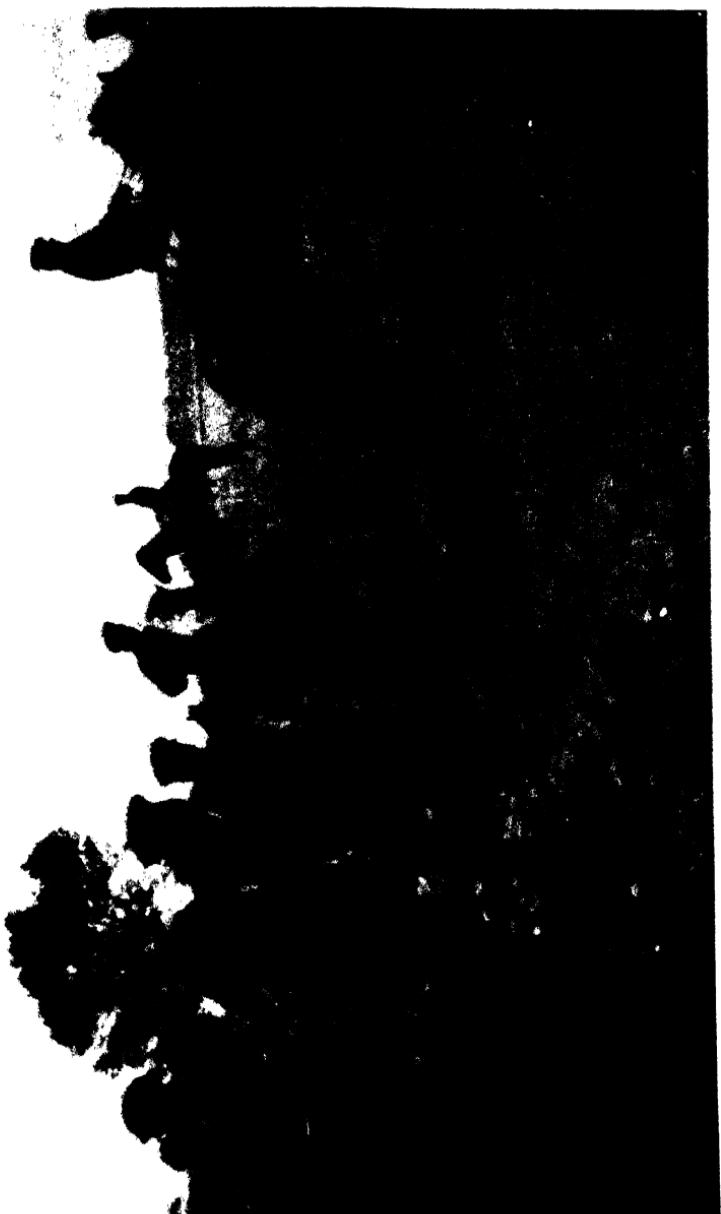
The Russian army was again on the defensive and was retiring to its Sha-ho position. The center had been nearly broken by Nodzu, and troops had been detached from the main body of the Eastern Army to support the Fourth Corps in the foothills. On the thirteenth and fourteenth the line swayed back and forth. On the fourteenth Nodzu advanced almost to the Sha River, and on this day was perhaps the heaviest artillery firing that the army had yet performed; the Seventeenth Corps by this means continued its desperate efforts to hold the line at the railway. General Bilderling was now resisting almost as desperate an attack on the railway as Stackelberg had resisted at Shou-shan in the battle of Liao-yang.

The battle reached its height on the twelfth, when Kourapatkin's advance was forever broken. It required yet five days for the Japanese effort to expend itself and for the Russians to make good their position on the Sha River.

On the fourteenth Kourapatkin took personal command of the Eastern Army, sending General Stackelberg to the rear with the reserves. Stackelberg had failed to turn the Japanese right flank and he was severely criticised for refusing two

or three battalions to General Samsonoff on his left, who thought he could turn the Japanese with this assistance. Stackelberg's error appears to have been that he took too literally General Kouropatkin's dazzling proclamation of advance and executed an assault upon the Japanese mountain front that had no hope of success. His troops advanced to within a mile and a half of the Japanese position in close formation, and in several instances were met by artillery fire that created great havoc in their ranks—nearly a whole company in one place being destroyed by shrapnel. When they reached the position the troops were compelled to fire at a mountain-top where it seemed perfectly certain the Japanese had only a relatively small force, but against which they could make no apparent impression.

At the moment when Stackelberg's attempt had failed, Oku was pushing back the Western Army. The line of battle was marked distinctly on the Russian side by the Japanese shells, which each day crept three or four versts nearer the Sha-ho, the Russians being daily so much pushed back. On the fourteenth both the commander-in-chief and his staff stationed on the Pagoda Hill at Er-ta-kou, as well as General Bilderling and his staff of the Western Army, sticking doggedly to their headquarters while their armies flowed around them, were severely shelled. On this day the Japanese might have taken Er-ta-kou, which would have sent the Russian army, which was ready to flee, flying back to Mukden and the Hun. The effort necessary to do this would have been small. At a raziest, or siding, on the railway, the veteran, General Bilderling, with his long white beard, made a remarkable figure standing calmly between the rails opposite a line of infantry supports while brisants throughout the afternoon fell all around him. With his headquarters stationed just behind the Seventeenth Corps, which was the only part of the line that throughout the battle held its



Retreat from T'ou-san-p'u: saving the guns



## *The Battle of the Sha-ho*

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own, he was being shelled from the southeast, the south and the west.

The day's killed and wounded on the twelfth were estimated at nine thousand, and the carrying capacity of the railway was overtaxed in transporting the wounded to Harbin, where fourteen train loads stood five days on the sidings before they could be evacuated. The losses soon reached such a high percentage that it was impossible to bring off all the wounded, and a medical officer was severely reprimanded for carrying off 150 wounded from the field, because it deprived the position of a whole battalion in doing so.

The battle of the Sha-ho was fought virtually in the open, back and forth between the positions, and in this respect was unlike any previous battle of the war. It demonstrated the complete bravery of both combatants and is a fair example under favorable conditions of the power of the Russian army to maneuver. This army demonstrated its power of mobility in its advance to the Japanese position, which was on the east nearly twenty miles from its own, and then in retiring again to the Sha-ho before the Japanese advance.

The disaster to Stackelberg on the twelfth and the loss of the two regiments of the Ingermanland Brigade under General Zashuck below Tou-san-p'u were the great events that decided the battle of the Sha-ho. The attempt of Kourapatkin to advance was worthy of his boast. On the day of that attempt 50,000 shells were given out to the artillery. The First Corps of the Eastern Army, under General Gerngrossz, reached within about eight miles of Pen-shi-hu; the Western Army arrived within about five miles of Yen-t'ai—these two points marking the limit of the Russian advance. On the thirteenth, when the Japanese began to advance, General Stackelberg was compelled to bring his army back in a line with Pien-chia-p'u-tzu and the holding of the line depended on the Seventeenth Corps, which now fought a

tremendous artillery defense covering four days. The loss of the two Ingemanland regiments from Caluga made a deep impression upon the right flank. In the Ninth Regiment all the officers but nine were lost. Three of the four battalions which constituted the regiment were lost and the remaining battalion was merged in another regiment. There were but eleven officers and two battalions of the Tenth Regiment that survived the fight of the twelfth. Twenty guns were lost to the enemy west of the railway where this day's battle occurred, while twenty-four or twenty-five guns were lost east of the railway, where an artillery commander before he was killed said that he was not informed that the army was falling back, and before he knew it the Japanese marched on him dressed in Russian uniforms.

The battle in the plain was distinguished by a good deal of confusion. The Russians supposed that the Japanese as well as themselves suffered considerably from their own fire. The kind of destruction which armies wreak upon themselves was well illustrated here. One Russian battery was sent to the rear because its shells, exploding prematurely, were killing so many of its own soldiers. The battlefield at Tou-san-p'u became so involved and the dust and smoke were so thick that it was impossible for the different contingents to recognize each other.

The Japanese appeared to have been surprised by the Russian advance. But they did not appear to have been at all alarmed. They left their bridges and outworks intact, as if with the intention of returning. At their main position they reduced the force of the Eastern Army under Stackelberg by seven thousand in two days. In the same length of time the rest of Kouropatkin's line was weakened by nearly double this number, and the Japanese were taking the offensive. The Japanese not only completely frustrated Kouropatkin's attempt to turn their right flank, but defeated him on

## *The Battle of the Sha-ho*

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his right flank, and though they did not break his center they pushed him beyond the Sha-ho and took the Pootiloff-Novogorod Hill, which, had it been held by them, would have broken his position on the Sha-ho. The capture of this hill, lying between the railway and Er-ta-kou, itself threatened to turn the advance into a retreat to the Hun. Kourapatkin ordered the entire line to retire, and assembled five regiments to recapture this position. The position was that of a hill sloping upward from the south and ending abruptly at the Sha River, which flowed around its northern extremity. It commanded the plain to the north for many miles, as well as the hill position of the Fourth Corps where Kourapatkin had until now maintained his headquarters. The crest was scored with trenches and occupied by about one regiment, behind which the Japanese had placed a battery. The east end of the hill was called Pootiloff, the west Novogorod, designations given after the battle. The Eighty-sixth and Eighty-eighth regiments maintained a frontal attack against Pootiloff, while the Nineteenth and Twentieth regiments attacked Novogorod from the flank. The Russian batteries were placed to the right of the Nineteenth and Twentieth regiments. The Thirty-sixth Regiment was selected to make a detour and capture Pootiloff from the rear. In doing so it suffered greatly from the fire of the Eighty-sixth Regiment. The attack was made on the night of the sixteenth of October, and this now famous position was recaptured from the Japanese with a loss of three thousand Russian soldiers. About nine hundred of this number were lost on Pootiloff, of whom an unknown number were killed by the fire of the Eighty-sixth Regiment because that fire was not suspended in time. The main position was on the part of the hill called Novogorod. The bodies of several hundreds of Japanese were found in the works at daybreak of the seventeenth, but their total losses could only be surmised. With this

## *The Tragedy of Russia.*

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achievement, made at great cost, Kouropatkin was able to make good his position on the Sha River, and although firing continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth this event practically closed the battle of Sha-ho.

The land battles had constantly increased in magnitude. While at Liao-yang the main line of battle was about fifteen miles long, the battle of the Sha-ho extended over a line nearly twice that length. The Russian army was perhaps not more than ten thousand men stronger than at the battle of Liao-yang, yet its artillery was about double. Counting the invalid, the Russian estimate of their own losses was forty-five thousand. By far the greater number of casualties occurred during the army's retirement after reaching the main Japanese position.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### DESTRUCTION OF THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

KOUROPATKIN'S proclamation was out. The new reservists arriving at Mukden station proceeded south without delay to the position. On the fourth the baggage of the commander-in-chief and the staff was packed ready for the advance.

On the early morning of the fifth, at Fu-ling, seven miles to the east, the troops were crossing the Hun by two bridges one and a half miles apart, en route to the south. It was a day to sing. The sky was blue, the sun bright, and wild geese were flying south. The farmers were gathering in their kao-liang and other grain. Since my last visit to the hills that here jutted into the valley of the Hun, defenses had been constructed everywhere. Some of the Chinese houses were deserted. At the eastern edge of the forest surrounding the Imperial Tombs at Fu-ling a great deal of wood had been cut for use in the construction of bridges. Near Chiu-chan, a place made famous in the battle of Mukden, as being the spot where the Japanese broke the Russian line, a train of ammunition carts came out of the hills, followed by troops of the First Siberian Corps, which had been in camp there, and made their way through the sand of the wide river bed to a bridge crossing the stream.

In the middle of the afternoon, when I arrived at Fu-shun, twenty miles east of Mukden on the Hun River, a large part of the transport of the Third Corps, which had itself started south, had just arrived at the two small bridges there and was slowly crossing. General Stackelberg had moved his headquarters from Fu-ling to Ho-shen-p'u in the south on

the day before and had himself passed through Fu-shun. By nightfall I had penetrated several miles into the mountains south of the Hun River and spent the night with the keeper of a little temple at the Village of Ch'ien-chin-p'u, where the villagers informed me that the soldiers had passed southward the day before.

On the morning of the sixth I overtook the column and followed it for some distance. The hoar-frost dissolving in the morning sun moistened the roads and softened the dead crops. As the soldiers marched along they pulled up the peanut vines and the turnips and spread themselves out over the fields like a migratory herd. Whatever they might use they took, greatly to the astonishment of the Chinese, who were not yet accustomed in this region to the depredations of the soldiers. Occasionally they ventured to speak a few words of Russian, for the Chinese are quick to establish a basis upon which to deal without violence. We proceeded south by the Shi-hu-ch'ang road and up the Shi River to Pa-chia-tzü in the mountains. The middle of the afternoon I passed over the Hua-ling, where a battalion of the Sixth Brigade was encamped, and then over the Kao-t'ou-ling, where a similar force was engaged in widening and leveling the native cart road. It was apparent that whatever came of the war the Russians, at any rate, would have greatly improved communications, especially in the mountains, where nearly all the passes had been widened by blasting and the approaches leveled up.

At the advanced position I met General Danieloff and his staff, who said that there were no troops farther south, only Cossacks, and I returned with them to General Ivanoff's headquarters. This was the Third Corps, formerly the Eastern Detachment that had fought most of the battles of the Feng-huang-ch'eng road.

On the seventh I proceeded west just inside the position.

Frederick McCormick -



General. Baron Bilderling

General Bilderling (autograph)



The road was sometimes a mere bridle path, but led through little orchards in the recesses of the mountains and over picturesque passes covered with ripening foliage in all the autumn colors. The officers warned me to beware of the "Hung-hu-tzus!"—their *bête noir*. I observed when a stranger appeared up there in the hills the knowledge flew like wildfire—one's progress was heralded by the natives. The natives did not understand the appearance of the army so unexpectedly, and were a little startled and curious to know what was going to happen. They seemed to be mostly in the roadways watching the orderlies going up and down, or from some eminence viewing the encampments. The temptation to climb to some high lookout was often a fatal misfortune to the Chinese. It brought them under the suspicion of being spies. It only required an ignorant Chinese peasant high up on a mountainside, or posing near a pinnacle—where in fact he might be informing by gesture the countryside—to incense the simple Russian soldiers, and a charge by these soldiers of being a signaller, or "signalchik," as they called it, was sufficient evidence upon which to execute the victim.

The activity of the various columns in these difficult mountains, where the Russians were now applying themselves to a task—that of advance—such as the Japanese appeared to have just quit and for which they had set the Russian army an example, afforded an entirely new view of the Russian soldiers. The region was new to them; they had to traverse a wide zone of hostile country, and were building roads and bridges along the primitive, native highways, as Kuroki's army had done in its long march through the Mo-t'ien-ling. As pioneers they seemed at their best, and their costumes seemed to harmonize so much better with the colors of autumn than with the colors of spring and summer, and were especially harmonious with the gray of the fields.

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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I arrived at T'ai-kou, where was General Krastilinsky's division of the Third Corps, and was entertained by the officers of a battery. At noon we mounted a high hill, from which we could see both flanks of the Eastern Army's position. Late in the afternoon I reached Stackelberg's headquarters at Ho-shen-p'u, where I stopped overnight. In the evening, while sitting with Colonel Waters of the British army and Captain Reichman of the American army in a native fang-tzu, we heard just after nightfall the band playing on the outskirts of the camp, and Colonel Waters remarked solemnly, "They are marching them off." It was indeed true—the men were being marched off to music to take their place by night along the advanced position. It was a weird and solemn moment just before we lay down for the night.

At nine in the morning of the eighth I continued westward, passing the Second Army Corps, commanded by General Sassulitch, which was likewise pushing southward. To the west of his line of advance I arrived at a little village in time to see a squad of Cossacks looting a couple of native merchants of a quantity of pears. The plundered men appealed to me, but I could of course do nothing for them. On the other hand, I was in need of bread, but could get none at any price, because they were afraid to let the Cossacks see that there was anything else to loot. Among the mild and well-mannered Chinese the soldiers were ogres; the Cossacks were like savages.

On the morning of the ninth, when the battle was ready to commence, I left Mukden for the Western Army, crossing the Hun about an hour after dawn. The region was now a network of telegraph communications. The railroad up the Hun River valley to the coal mines opposite Fu-shun had been completed since the loss of the Yen-t'ai mines, and a train was moving leisurely off to the east. The Fourth

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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Corps of General Zarubaieff had advanced to the Pagoda Hill, and Kouropatkin with his headquarters was at Kuan-shan. I passed the headquarters of the Tenth Corps at Chiang-hu-t'un on the Imperial road and about noon reached the headquarters of the Seventeenth Corps, about four versts further west on the railway. General Bilderling's headquarters were just being established in the Village of Hsulin-tzü. The general himself, now the commander of the Western Army, had not yet arrived. The officers were selecting their quarters, and in one fang-tzu three officers were standing about a native oven where a Chinese was making corn muffins. The smell of the muffins was tantalizing, and it was evident that the officers were only waiting until the muffins were cooked to try them. The simplest Chinese are equally hospitable and polite with the best classes of Occidentals, and here was an excellent prospect of the few Chinese going hungry. Most of the food and forage which had accumulated here disappeared in a few days, and the hospitable Chinese peasant who had entertained the officers on their arrival stood on the broken wall of his desolated premises and watched the shrapnel creeping up to the village as the Japanese advanced, and when the bullets were striking the rear of the train on the railway track opposite, he was still standing there trying to make out what was happening. In return, however, these Chinese often fared well on food from the officers' tables.

By noon the masses of troops began coming down along the railway. Battalion after battalion passed, and then several troops of cavalry and artillery. At 2:15 in the afternoon there were three long cannon rolls on the southwest, which in a few minutes were several times repeated and were the beginning of a regular cannonade. A cold rain was falling. There was now an interval of ten minutes, during which a long line of artillery hurried along the

railway to the south. A report now reached General Bilderling from Stackelberg's army, which was a day's march south of Ho-shen-p'u, that Mischenko had reported that the Japanese were not in position at the Yen-t'ai coal mines, which, with the position leading to the east was the objective point of the Eastern Army. It was a good illustration of the false information which circulates in an army during an engagement. The Japanese were apprehending Kouropatkin's design on their right flank, and were falling steadily back, but were actually defending the position mentioned.

The Tenth Corps reported the Japanese throwing up earthworks in the path, and the army was warned that the Japanese were preparing to resist. The advance guard, about four miles south of Hsu-lin-tzü, moving toward Yen-t'ai, was engaged about 3:30 in the afternoon. A heavy cannonade extended west beyond the Sha River, which at this place flows in a southerly direction. Passing back of the line, I reached the right of the Seventeenth Corps at evening. It required two hours to find my way through the kao-liang, which was dripping with water, and over the slippery roads. The Seventeenth Corps on the right was pushing down the Sha River and pressing the Japanese left. Just at dusk, while I was seeking the Fifty-second Regiment of dragoons—Colonel Stakovitch—I was arrested by sentries, of whom I inquired for the road. As I was being marched off with one soldier at my horse's bridle and the other following behind, a third soldier ran out of the kao-liang and spoke to me in English. He was an American Jew who had been impressed into the Russian army while on a visit to Russia. He was a young fellow, and appeared to be exceedingly anxious to exhibit his qualifications for a peaceable occupation in a safe place. Later he became an interpreter at Harbin. He had been standing all afternoon in the wet weeds and kao-liang beside a muddy lane, his clothes soaked with water.

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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I was led into a field of tall kao-liang to a battery of artillery that had just fired its last shot for the day and was shifting its position. It was now dark, and it was necessary before I could reach Colonel Stakovitch to have a guard. The country was like a wilderness and the darkness was intense. We advanced along a roadway until we reached a place that must have been a village, because the road was deeply sunken and overhung with willows. It seemed to be a rendezvous, for we met other officers, and a consultation was held for several minutes. About eight o'clock in the evening two officers, with an escort of Cossacks, were dispatched to the Fifty-second Dragoons, and I accompanied them. It was nearly ten o'clock when we reached Colonel Stakovitch's command and found him occupying the Village of Tou-san-pu, which he had taken from a force of about one battalion of Japanese, including cavalry. The Japanese had made no resistance. The position was the most advanced in the whole line, and Colonel Stakovitch was in great doubt as to whether his commander would permit him to remain in occupation of it during the night. He was in the outer buildings of a large native distillery, where he offered the hospitality of his camp. The Japanese, he said, had left a bridge across the river and had withdrawn rather hurriedly, leaving their works undamaged.

We bivouacked in one of the inner buildings, picketing our horses in the court outside. The officers of the Colonel's staff dined on but meager fare from their saddle-bags, and gave me a place at their board as a guest of honor. One of the younger officers, Annabel by name, a perfectly fearless young fellow and the charm of the bivouac, seemed to make it his special duty to anticipate my wants, which, considering that it was they who had fought the battle and that I was a mere onlooker, was a mark of kindness which itself could never be forgotten. A most pathetic sequel made it yet more

kind; relatively speaking—for there was no time in which to repay his kindness—it was but a few hours until he fell, his breast crushed by a piece of shell. I never saw him again. He was buried among the kao-liang fields at Tou-san-p'u. In contrast to Annabel was a young officer who spoke English very well and complained of the hardships and of having had no newspapers, books, or writing paper for three months.

We went to sleep with misgivings, as Colonel Stakovitch was uneasy about his right flank and was still waiting for approval to remain in the place. During the night three or four messengers arrived and he got but little sleep. On the morning of the tenth we arose to find bullet holes in the paper windows of the house where we had slept. The Japanese had closed up and were very near, and Colonel Stakovitch was still worried about his right flank.

By the middle of the morning General Greikoff on the west was reported to be moving back, and as his right flank was more than ever exposed, Colonel Stakovitch at 11:30 moved back his artillery, consisting of two guns, from the village. The village now became the firing line. At two o'clock we were in heavy rifle fire and had to take refuge behind the buildings and walls of the village. Stakovitch himself led the infantry line into its position, and I was surprised to see with what daring he mounted to the tops of walls where, in plain view of the Japanese, he inspected their position through his glasses. The tenth was another bright sunny day. The sky had cleared, and with the sun upon them the Russian officers and men could be seen for a long distance by the Japanese to the south, whose vision was not impaired by the sun shining in their eyes, as was our own.

At two o'clock the Japanese were pressing their advance so hard that we had to retire from the village by a sunken

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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road. The bullets were chipping up the tiled roofs of the houses and striking the trees with such frequency that the birds and crows could not light in them. Colonel Stakovitch retired to the open plain back of the village and sent Cos-sacks to scout his right flank, and by nightfall, distrusting the Japanese movement, fell farther back.

Seeing his line about to be pushed back on the right flank, General Kouropatkin ordered it to be made strong by earth-works.

During the day the Dragoons captured a copy of the Mikado's message to the Japanese army, in which he said he was still awaiting a grand victory, and by this the Russian Grand Army was informed of a great intention upon the part of its antagonist. The Japanese movement of the west indicated that they were re-enforcing their left flank. At the close of the day the lines were parallel, running from southeast to northwest. The Russians had discovered the difficulty of forcing the Japanese position on the railway in front of the T'ai-tzü—where the Japanese had apparently at least one hundred guns—from the direction of the plain, and were already preparing against being defeated in the plain. Here they had an excess of at least five thousand cavalry over the Japanese.

In the afternoon four wounded Japanese were captured and brought to General Bilderling's headquarters. They were poorly clad in summer dress and seemed to show that the infantry had not yet received its winter clothing. The Japanese cavalry was known to be properly clad and it was believed that as the Japanese army could replenish all losses within ten days, that it had all the munitions of war that were necessary for the battle. At places like Tou-san-p'u, which was now Japanese, now Russian, some intelligent Chinese had built bomb-proofs in which they had sheltered their families and where they had gathered some of their

belongings. Others were moving their belongings from one place to another, but everywhere Chinese continued to gather their crops between the cannonadings, and sometimes under rifle fire. Often a single Chinese could be seen working away for hours unconscious of the fact that he was the target of several rifles and could at last be seen to disappear calmly into the walls of his little garden.

A heavy cannonade west of the railway and in the foot-hills in front of the Fourth Corps, continued throughout the day and indicated the beginning of a great battle. On the eleventh the cannonading began at five o'clock in the morning and continued almost unbroken until 6:30 in the evening. The Tenth Corps, and the Fourth Corps were now meeting with strong resistance. From the railway south of Hsu-lin-tzü the hills could be seen for miles flowered with bursting shrapnel; the main body of the Eastern Army was approaching the main position east and north of the Yen-t'ai mines, and General Bilderling again pressed back the Japanese left, Stakovitch for the third time occupying the Village of Tou-san-p'u.

The battlefield by this time, when we were on the eve of the greatest events, began to show the effects of more than two days of fighting; the field hospitals being nearly all busy, and the wounded could be seen making their way to the rear at all parts of the line. At nightfall on the eleventh the armies for thirty miles of the plain and the hills were facing each other in close contact.

Six hundred wounded had arrived at the field hospital at Hsu-lin-tzü; a mile of ground was lost by evening. It was seen that the Japanese were determined to hold a small stream called the Hsu-li, which described their position on the plain and emptied into the Sha-ho south of Tou-san-p'u. As Stackelberg, with the main body of the Eastern Army, had reached the eastern extremity of this position in the

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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mountains and the Japanese showed no disposition to retire further, Kouropatkin issued a peremptory command to advance. This effort, which was to begin on the morrow, the Seventeenth Corps prepared for by retaking in the night at the point of the bayonet a village near the railway.

The fighting opened at dawn of the twelfth on the southwest by a cannonade that gradually extended to the eastward. At 8:30 the artillery of the Seventeenth Corps on the railway was laboring to clear the field in front preparatory to an infantry advance. The baggage of the staff of the Western Army at Hsu-lin-tzü was in a state of preparation for moving forward. At 9:30 General Bilderling and his staff were on the railway embankment a mile and a half to the south, and not more than a verst behind were the Russian batteries over which the Japanese shells were breaking. While standing with the staff at this place young Count Keller—son of General Keller, who was killed at Yang-tzuling—who was attached to the Western Army staff, handed me a letter from a little girl in Cincinnati addressed to his father. Keller had just finished telling me of the great possibilities for destruction and havoc within the next twenty-four hours. We had been discussing the artillery, which on the Russian side had doubled in strength since the battle of Liao-yang, and he had finished saying that more ammunition had been used in that great battle than was used in the whole of the Franco-Prussian War.

“Read it,” said Keller; “my father did not live to receive it.”

The letter was evidently written when General Keller was fighting the battle of Mo-t’ien-ling. It told him how wicked it was for men to kill each other, and in a childish hand, with the complete confidence of childhood, the little Miss begged General Keller to “please stop the war.” If she should ever read these lines, that little girl may know

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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that, though her letter never reached General Keller, it was treasured as a memento of an unhappy and unfortunate war by his son, and that many gallant Russian officers of rank who were as helpless as General Keller to influence the course of the government and of the conspirators shared her convictions.

Within a few minutes we could see from our position that a great battle was raging along the foothills, where Nodzu was pushing back along the flank of the Fourth Corps, and it was apparent that the Japanese were rapidly gaining ground in the center right under Kouropatkin's eyes. At eleven in the morning Stakovitch was still holding Tou-san-p'u, and the Ingemanland Brigade was attempting the turning of Oku's left flank to counteract the disaster taking place in the center, where the Fourth Corps had already given way and the Tenth Corps as well had now begun to fall back. Masses of troops throughout the morning moved to the southwest, where General Bilderling's effort to turn Oku's flank was in progress.

Leaving the staff where it was, still stationed on the railway, I rode south to the line with these troops and turned east, crossing the railway to a little village on the Chinese Imperial road, in front of which intrenchments had been thrown up. It was a part of the Tenth Corps, which was making a desperate effort to hold its position. A quarter of a mile farther east was the Hung-pao Hill, along the front of which shrapnel was breaking. I halted fifteen minutes to feed my horse, and while resting in the village inn an officer called to identify me and to say that the Japanese were very near.

The hill was still being held, but the Japanese were pressing in on the east of it. Leaving the village shortly after midday I reached the Hung-pao Hill, from the summit of which the line of battle from Tou-san-p'u to the eastern

mountains could be seen. At two o'clock the advance line of the Tenth Corps could be seen falling back and occupying the trenches leading off at right angles from the front of Hung-pao Hill. The Japanese artillery opposite could be distinguished by the clouds of dust which it raised when it fired. Opposite the hill three miles to the south was a similar elevation, on the front of which a Japanese battery was seen to take its position and open fire upon us. It began with brisants, some of which passed over us, but the most of which fell on the left slope of the hill just back of the trenches. About a dozen officers had gathered on the crest and were watching the action, and we all immediately lay down out of view. The tremendous noise of the brisants, with the great clouds of black dust which they threw up, had within a few minutes turned this spot into a crater, like that of a volcano. The battlefield as far as the eye could reach was a mass of overhanging haze and smoke, but partly on account of the half bare fields and the manner in which the Japanese were crowding our position their lines could be distinctly traced. Especially where any movement took place it was always defined by the rising dust, for the fields and roads were now dry—a large part of the crops had been harvested. Nothing could be heard of Stackelberg's battle on the extreme east, though it was known that he was sending re-enforcements to the Fourth Corps, which was now joining with the Tenth to arrest Nodzu from wedging in at the foothills. The Tenth was calling for re-enforcements, and at 2:20 along the road on the east side of the hill leading to Chiang-hu-t'un a mass of troops, artillery and field kitchens of this corps was retiring. Had the shells with which we were being bombarded struck this body great havoc would have resulted. Two or three brisants fell a little to their rear. They appeared to be in plain view of the Japanese artillerists on the hill opposite us. Within five

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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minutes at least twenty shells had struck not more than three hundred yards to their right.

All but one or two of the officers now left the summit of the hill, retiring with the troops that had by this time been able to make their way out of the road beneath. The Japanese continued to shell with brisants, and among the great columns of dust and smoke which they sent up, the Russian soldiers could be seen occupying the trenches, some of them disappearing in the smoke and others skirting the great holes excavated by the explosions while they were en route. For several minutes infantrymen carrying ammunition continued to cross this zone. From where they lay close to the ground they awaited a salvo of explosives and then after the explosions arose quickly and made a dash for the trenches a few hundred yards ahead.

Shells could be seen desultorily breaking on the hills five miles to the southeast. The haze and smoke had accumulated in the plain and was now hanging in heavy clouds west of the railway, where the battle was centering.

I returned to the west of the railway in the direction of Tou-san-p'u, where the most terrible fighting of the day had taken place. General Zashuck of the Ingermanland Brigade was wounded, and Kreestopenko, one of his colonels, killed. The possession of Tou-san-p'u was contested until noon, when the Japanese made good their occupation and Bilderling's attempt on the Japanese left had entirely failed. A brigade was all but destroyed, and was so completely demoralized that when one of its officers, who spoke Russian imperfectly, wandered back, he was arrested as a Japanese, and it was some time before he established his identity.

General Bilderling left Hsu-lin-tzü shortly after noon when Tou-san-p'u was lost, and retired to Han-ch'ien-p'u. At four o'clock all the troops that on the ninth had hurried past this place to the front were trooping back after a

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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hard three-days' battle. At 4:15 the roads leading up the railway, like those at the Hung-pao Hill, were filled with retiring armies, while furious rifle firing was going on to the south and southwest. The trains were assisting the army to retire, picking up wounded and stragglers in the rear. The line was but a mile south of Hsu-lin-tzü, where General Bilderling had had his headquarters in the morning, and the Japanese were harassing the beaten troops, whose retreat, however, they were unable to infect with disorder. The armies moved in an orderly and dogged progress toward their position on the Sha. The retreating men were so tired that they could hardly take another step. They could hear a continuous battle on the east and on the west as well, and at sundown, before they had made good their retreat, the sound of one terrific rifle attack after another forced them on.

A surgical train was all day busy near General Bilderling's headquarters with the wounded, and several long Red Cross trains were dispatched north during the day. At sundown the rifle firing continued and could be heard in the southwest like the hum of a dynamo, where the Russian rear-guard was holding its ground. During the night both the Japanese and Russians got lost in the intricate and muddy water-courses in the vicinity of Tou-san-p'u and fired upon their own men.

The battle of the twelfth subsided, and General Bilderling, with his staff in the gloom of nightfall, came up from below Hsu-lin-tzü and passed along the railway over the Sha to their new bivouac at Han-ch'ien-p'u, where we all spent the night in strange quarters. We had some pieces of candle with which we illuminated the dark Chinese house, and waited for our evening meal. The officers told stories of exploits that had taken place during the day at Tou-san-p'u, where sixteen guns were lost. The artillerymen had been

killed and the horsemen in the rear made a desperate and heroic effort to recover the guns, galloping up to them through a heavy fire. But all of their horses being killed the guns were finally given up. The fighting for the day had trebled in severity that of the eleventh, and as we did not know what would be the events of the morrow we laid down to sleep early. The staff did not creep to its bivouac like beaten and disheartened men. The officers appeared more like lords who rise above present disasters and know how to await a better day. General Bilderling's situation was not so good as in the battle of Liao-yang, when he assisted in arresting Kuroki's advance north of the T'ai-tzü. Before Oku he was falling back, and it was not certain that at the Sha-ho he could hold Oku as Stackelberg had done at Shou-shan.

At dawn of the thirteenth the Japanese continued their advance, and the whole army was on the defensive. Especially in the plain was there a continuous cannonade, equaling that of the twelfth. The staff arose, I thought, rather late, but it was according to routine, which did not seem to be affected by the misfortunes of the battlefield. The army had but one duty, and that was to contest the ground over which it was falling back. During the day a messenger arrived from the Eastern Army, giving the details of Stackelberg's disasters. The first reports which we had received of General Gerngrosz's arrival at Pen-shi-hu were disproved, for he had not arrived within five miles of that place. Stackelberg had been continually fighting, but had made no advance whatsoever, and was now falling back.

The rear of the army was quiet; the roads were deserted except for the Red Cross carts and litters with their wounded crawling slowly along. The sounds of battle could be heard loudly at Mukden, where the concussions were shaking the windows. The Japanese had made no advance during the

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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night, but toward noon the entire front of the Western Army was again falling back. At midnight the baggage and the wounded that had accumulated at Hsu-lin-tzu was safely removed and the place evacuated. General Bilderling went farther back, also. The Tenth Corps had abandoned Hung-pao Hill and was at Sha-ho-p'u on the river. In the Seventeenth Corps bitter complaints were heard of General Mischenko's force, and a division of the center under General Mao, who fell back every time the Japanese pressed them.

The Japanese began their advance on the fourteenth, two hours before dawn, and they appeared to be determined upon taking the Sha-ho position. The Fourth Corps sent the press correspondents attached to it to the rear. At this time Kourapatkin took the command of all the forces in the foothills and mountains. In the rear of the Tenth Corps at seven in the morning large numbers of native refugees, who had been dislodged by the battle, were fleeing before the Russian armies as the Russian armies were retiring before the Japanese advance. There was an almost continuous line of these refugees winding along the Chinese Imperial road to Mukden. At eight in the morning fully a mile's length of artillery and reserve ammunition caissons were falling back in reserve half way to the Hun River. The baggage of the Tenth Corps was also moving northward and filled up the road for a mile and a half. When I arrived at the Sha-ho the battle had developed along the entire line, but at eight o'clock was most noisy in the foothills, and then the noise seemed to shift at nine in the morning to west of the railway. A great artillery fire was opened upon the position occupied by the Japanese during the night. General Bilderling arrived at a little siding just above the Sha railway bridge at 9:15. The Japanese hussars, we learned, had at about two o'clock in the morning taken nine guns from the Tenth Corps, which was now calling for re-enforcements. The troops, however,

were shifted a little farther to the right, and the Tenth Corps left to shift for itself. Half a regiment poured across the railroad in front of us and advanced to a little village commanding the Sha River bridge.

"To-day the losses will be very great," remarked one of the staff, while another said, "The battle will be greater than at Liao-yang."

At 9:45 an additional heavy line of troops was drawn up behind Lin-shen-p'u at the bend of the Sha, and it was evident that General Bilderling feared the loss of the railway bridge. The Japanese were in possession of the only detached hills between the railway and foothills, from which they commanded the entire plain from the railway to Er-takou. The Seventeenth Corps on the railway had a better position than at any time during the battle, but on the left flank of the Western Army the Tenth Corps had a weaker position than it had had on the thirteenth and was unable to make a stand. The Japanese artillery had ceased firing about eight o'clock and continued silent for more than an hour, while they attacked the Tenth Corps with their infantry. At 10:30 several Japanese shells burst over a Russian battery not more than half a mile from us on the right, indicating that they had changed the position of their artillery and moved it much closer. Rifle firing soon followed, and it was seen that the Sixth Corps was moving forward. It was reported that the Japanese were falling back before them. The reverse was the case. The Sixth Corps was falling back and the Seventeenth was carrying on the most desperate artillery fire to steady the line that had yet been made. Better than any reports of the orderlies were the explosions of the Japanese shells by which the advance of the Japanese could be accurately gauged. At 12:20, when the Sixth Corps was reported to have pressed back the Japanese, one of the Japanese shimose brisants fell just in



General Tisenhausen (autograph), Chief-of-Staff, Third Army



## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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front of the staff position. To the haze of autumn was added the smoke of battle.

It began to cloud up and, on account of the heavy cannonading, at one o'clock rain fell, mixed with hail. Under a long serpentine cloud hovering over the battle line from the dim west to the distant mountains in the east a storm broke and raged throughout the day, culminating at four in the afternoon, when the scene was dramatic in the extreme. The Tenth Corps had continued to lose, and since 3:30 was being rapidly pressed back. The Seventeenth was firing desperately and apparently gaining a little on account of its great expenditure of artillery ammunition. At four o'clock it was believed that this was to be the greatest of all the six days since the army had engaged the enemy. An appeal for re-enforcements and support had just arrived from the Tenth Corps. The rain burst with renewed power over the little station where we stood. Some of the officers had taken shelter in some buildings on the east side of the track, and, throwing a waterproof over my saddle, I left my horse standing under the eave of one of the houses, and went inside and laid down on a bench covered with straw. I had not been in the house more than a few minutes when a *brisant* exploded on the opposite side of the track, in a spot filled with troops and horses. I sprang through the window and reached the railway embankment in time to see the effects of the explosion. Several other shells fell to the south of us, and the train of baggage wagons began to hurry away.

It was about 4:30 in the afternoon, and the Japanese, who evidently had discovered the range of the station, now began to regularly shell us. Within a few minutes we had received *brisants* on all sides. The first large numbers of wounded from the firing line to come up by this road had just arrived and had mingled with the baggage and ammunition trains and were moving along under great strain on the

slippery road. The roar of the artillery was mixed with the roll of thunder. Riderless horses careered frightened across the field nickering for their riders. Several carts were destroyed by the fire, and one horse galloped past with only the broken shafts of a baggage cart. One shell fell behind us and two or three others immediately in front. General Bilderling remained impassive on the railway embankment, while his adjutant fiercely shouted out the cry to the now excited column moving to the north, "Sha-gom!"—in a walk, slowly. Other officers repeated the orders, adding, "You see the staff stands, slowly! The staff remains!" Many commands were given before the men and wagons could be slowed down to a regular march.

The rainfall continued, and the Japanese, who were accustomed to attack in the latter part of the afternoon, continued shelling. The Sixth Corps had fallen back more than five miles, and it was evident that the Japanese battery shelling us was immediately to the west. The position of the Tenth Corps at evening was somewhat better than that of the Sixth. It had during the day frustrated an attempt of the Japanese hussars to break its left. Night closed with the wounded in litters and afoot struggling through the mud in the wet and cold. Horses dragging parts of destroyed vehicles passed en route to the rear. We could see the flash of the guns in the purple gloom before we left the position, and there was apparently no cessation of their fire. The hospital carriages were insufficient for carrying off the wounded, and it seemed that the ordinary train to carry them off would never arrive. The staff retired at dark, and when we reached headquarters at Su-chia-t'un a hospital train was pushing slowly southward. General Bilderling's right flank at night had been pushed back in the direction of Su-chia-t'un, and had retired to such a distance that General Bilderling issued orders that it must hold its position. The Japanese had suc-

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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cessfully enfiladed the Russian line at three separate places, where great losses to the Russians had resulted. Added to their successes on the twelfth at Tou-san-p'u and in the mountains over Stackelberg's main body, they had destroyed a regiment of the Fourth Corps, and by nightfall occupied the Pootiloff, or Lone Tree Hill. The army at the close of the day was prepared to fall farther back at early morning of the morrow.

On the morning of the fifteenth the Sha-ho position might be said to have passed to the Japanese. Only the artillery grouped in the center on the railway prevented the Japanese from occupying both banks of the river. On account of the rains the Russian army was unable to move easily, and the day was for the most part quiet, the battle continuing only in a desultory fashion. For several miles along the east side of the railway, where the embankment prevented its escape, the water was belly deep to a horse, and wounded men could be seen marooned on little islands here and there, where they had spent the night and had no means of escape.

The battle of the Sha-ho would now have been finished had not the position of the Grand Army been so absurd. Stackelberg, in his strong mountain positions, was holding the headwaters of the Sha, but in the plain the Japanese had pushed in the line for several versts in two places. While the great mass of artillery was apparently able to hold the railway, the army in the plain was in danger both of being flanked and of having its line broken. Kouropatkin, still at Kuan-shan, in order to recover his line, proceeded by a desperate effort to recapture Pootiloff, or Lone Tree Hill, which, if he were successful, would give the army a position for the winter.

When, on the morning of the sixteenth, the guns began slowly and solemnly firing, it was as though they grumbled at breaking the day of rest, for it was Sunday, the seventh

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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day of the battle. I passed the night in Mukden, and was in the field rather late in the morning, for I did not pass the Hun until after ten o'clock. From Mukden walls all the way to the Tenth Corps the Imperial road was filled with native women and children fleeing to Mukden. They were carrying a few effects and had come from places two and three miles north of the Sha, and their exodus showed that the Russians were throwing up positions in a line from Kuan-shan to the end of the old railway embankment at Su-chia-t'un. The floods had subsided, and the Imperial road, from the great amount of traffic during the last two days, through Pai-t'a-p'u and to the south was burnished like nickel. New telegraphs had been strung in all directions and were already become broken and tangled. The balloon of the Tenth Corps was back at Pai-t'a-p'u nearly to the Hun, and the corps headquarters was nearly twenty miles north of where it had been when the battle began. Several correspondents and attachés crossed the rear here, and the manager of the Mukden bank was watching the shelling of a battalion of infantry intrenching itself in a village below Pai-t'a-p'u. A great many wounded were coming out of the bleak fields a little farther down—some were being carried. The Japanese shrapnel reached as far north as a line intersecting Su-chia-t'un and Kuan-shan.

The Pagoda Hill at Er-ta-kou still marked the fighting line at the hills. At noon the batteries between Kuan-shan and the Imperial road were firing upon Pootiloff.

Kouropatkin had now drawn upon the Eastern Army for fully a third of its forces, with which to recover his center. The men of the Western Army were greatly aggravated by having their own guns turned against them, for the Japanese had so much of their artillery and ammunition as to be able to shell them at a range two or three versts greater than with their own field-guns. The guns taken at Tou-san-p'u and

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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those taken in the center on the twelfth were immediately turned against the Russians. At nightfall the Japanese had worked their way past Hsu-lin-tzü to Lin-shen-p'u, the possession of which was divided by the Sha River between the Russians and Japanese. The railway bridge was in dispute and could be occupied by neither side.

By evening I was far down toward this position and started to return at sundown to the headquarters of the Western Army. But learning that it had withdrawn to Kao-lao-tzu several versts north of its last position, I stopped in a village between the railway and the Imperial road not far from Pootiloff and quite close to the position. The village was entirely abandoned except by a Cossack post. I occupied a fanz-tzu a little distance from the Cossacks, where I found forage for my horse. I had once before slept here, but I could now scarcely recognize the place, for the houses were all partly dismantled. I was alone, and, as firing continued intermittently and the staff had moved farther back, I made as little show as possible, so that I might not be molested by the Cossacks, and awaited with some apprehension the events of the night.

At dark General Kouropatkin began to assemble troops to take the Pootiloff and Novogorod Hill. At eleven o'clock a terrifying rifle fire began at Lin-shen-p'u and along the Sha to Sha-ho-p'u. It was accompanied by cannon on the south-east, where the hill was being bombarded preliminary to the bayonet charge with which it was intended to be taken. I had never heard such a grawsome clatter. I had put my horse in one end of the building where I bivouacked, and barred the door so as to guard against mishap from losing him. I had two matches, with one of which I lighted a piece of candle, and with this lighted a fire and heated some water in a broken kettle which I found in the house. I ate some provisions from my saddle-bags and then lay down on

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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a heap of straw on the k'ang. But the night was so terrifying that it was impossible to sleep, and it seemed that the bullets must at any time be turned against the place. A counter attack was made at Lin-shen-p'u by the Japanese to distract the attention of the Russians from Pootiloff. They tried to rush the village, but were repulsed. The firing continued until morning from the railway to Pootiloff, and at dawn Kouropatkin's soldiers were in possession of the works on the crest of Pootiloff and Novogorod.

This was one of the most desperate actions of the battle on the part of the Russians and concluded the grand fighting. The Japanese did not essay any retaliation since they had defended the hill so well, although they found their opportunity the succeeding night to take a pyramidal hill south-east of Er-ta-kou occupied by six or seven hundred of Mischenko's men, who lost three hundred and eighty of their number without being able to inflict any appreciable injury upon the Japanese, who had them under cross-fire. They therefore had no alternative but retreat.

At dawn I lighted a fire with my remaining match, made some coffee, ate the small remnant of my stores, and went back to Su-chia-t'un. I found very confused reports regarding the capture of Pootiloff. It was not precisely known what had taken place. The sacrifice had been so great that the achievement was never mentioned, and the subject seemed to have been officially tabooed. A train of artillery ammunition arrived from Harbin and began to discharge its cargo at Su-chia-t'un. In the evening, as the staff of the Western Army was leaving its position on the railway below Su-chia-t'un, it was again shelled by the Japanese, with long-range guns. As four shells dropped in quick succession near us, an officer remarked that the Japanese must have at least four long-range guns, perhaps nine or ten versts in range. This was the range of the Russian field-guns, of which the

## *Destruction of the Russian Offensive*

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Japanese had taken more than forty in this battle, together with twice that number taken in previous battles.

During the day Kouropatkin was not able to utilize the Pootiloff-Novgorod Hill in such a way as to dislodge the Japanese artillery, which was still breaking shrapnel within a mile or two of Pai-t'a-p'u. In the afternoon the troops in the hamlets there were digging themselves into the ground and preparing a strong position. The battle, however, was over. It closed on the ninth day, after a tenacious defense of five days, at the end of which the Japanese appeared no longer disposed to contest the Sha-ho, where they had a good position. Kouropatkin, though he had been compelled to fall back before the Japanese, had narrowly saved his boast that he would no longer retreat, and he too was content to suspend the contention on the Sha-ho and go into winter quarters. The line of contact on the east was seven miles north of the point where the Eastern Army had attacked the Japanese, losing between eight and nine thousand men. On the west the line was ten miles north of where the Western Army had attacked. Although the Russians had been steadily pushed back and had lost the battle of the Sha-ho, they had captured a total of seventeen guns, of which three had been taken by the Ural Cossacks. According to their own reports they had lost to the Japanese twenty-seven guns. The expenditure of ammunition had exceeded all calculations. On the Russian side the expenditure was so great on the fourteenth that a dispatch of troops from Harbin was delayed to forward ammunition. For several days the Japanese fired sparingly, indicating that they had exhausted their own ammunition supply. At the same time they held the Russians to a bitter day-to-day resistance and continued to test their center and right flank. At the close of the seventeenth the losses had exceeded those of all the fighting around Liao-yang. It was another disaster to the

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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Government and to Kourpatkin, who had promised an advance, and it was a great defeat of his army. The Japanese had advanced ten miles nearer to Mukden, and had made the future task of taking that place easier by reducing the distance which they would have to go in reaching it, to a day's march.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE ARMY BASE IN WINTER

MUKDEN never in its history was so busy as during the winter of 1904-5. From dawn to dark the streets were filled with traffic, and in the most bitter weather they were as busy as the Manchurians would have had them at their most favored season. Almost every article of Chinese trade was purchased by the Russians, and persons of wealth paid very large prices to the Chinese for their products, and especially for so-called objects of art, which became the vogue. The silver workers did an immense business, making buttons for the officers' uniforms and semi-foreign jewelery. Mukden, being a large center for furs, while unable to export, received at retail unusual prices, especially for its choice skins. All its cotton goods it sold outright for clothing for the soldiers, while its cheap furs were manufactured into Russian busbys and coats. It is probable that the trade in furs and cottons exceeded that carried on under normal conditions.

As the Chinese only require protection and order to keep them active traders, Mukden, under a native and foreign police system, was for Manchuria a model mart. At its gates lawlessness virtually ceased. While just outside its walls hamlets and villages were desolated, it was rarely that a home within was molested. The Russian soldier, however, extended in the form of pilferings the predatory degradations he had practiced in camp. The visiting moujik wandered through the streets filching peanuts and Chinese comfits, and became the despair of the Chinese tradesman

and even of the military police. The disgusted Chinese shopmen contented themselves with a very mild revenge. They allowed their underlings to call the soldiers "Hung-hu-tzus," which, in this case, was an epithet of supreme contempt. A good idea of the revengeful character of the Chinese and his power to endure the things that he can be gained from this. The Russian soldier, charmed by the wonders of the Manchurian capital, wandered through the streets until the last minute, and, though he was often a nuisance to the Chinese, I do not remember ever to have seen one maltreated by them, and only once did I hear the epithet "foreign devil" applied to him openly, and then by children.

The machinery of native government at Mukden was formidable, and the native interests were so large that they were never entirely overridden, as at Liao-yang and other cities. Between them, the provincial administration, headed by the Tartar general, and the Russian civil and military administrations—which were generally at loggerheads with each other—the people received a fair measure of protection, and when the Russian army at last receded, the city on the whole retained a large measure of Russian wealth.

The Chinese found the Russians corrupt like themselves, and discussed ways of dealing with them, of which they complained, but which they were able perfectly to understand. At the beginning of December the exactions made by the Russian troops guarding the gates of the city became such a scandal and were complained of so seriously by the Tartar general that troops of the Fourteenth Division of the Eighth European Corps, which were said to be the best type of Russian troops, were detailed by the general staff to take the place of the Siberian troops, of whom the Chinese complained. An opinion of the Siberian troops may be formed from the fact that they carried on a systematic squeezing on

## *The Army Base in Winter*

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all purely Chinese traffic entering the city gates. Their depredations in this form so closely followed Chinese practice as to call for no particular resistance. It was only when the cupidity of the soldiers was excited that, at intervals, they overreached themselves and became robbers. They were not so clever as the Chinese and much less capable of self-restraint. These remarks do not apply to the lawless elements of the Russian army, which, on account of the robber proclivities of the race, got the name of "Caucasian." The Russians proper were most frequently the victims of this element. In the railway settlement the authorities posted notices that persons wishing to carry arms must wear Russian clothes. The effect of this was the depriving of Caucasians of their arms at the army base. Numbers of this race were sent to the prisons at Saghalen. Their ill-fame was a byword in Mukden, and their land, the Caucasus, was spoken of as a land of footpads, kidnappers and assassins. On the first of December in front of the Russian prison, near the Tartar general's yamen, were eight of these men disarmed and surrounded by a guard drawn up in the street, ready to be taken north to prison. It was said in the street that they had revolted and that their leader had been shot.

Under all the embarrassments of Russian military domination the even trend of city life was little disturbed. The people celebrated their festivals, civil and religious. These were in fact welcomed and encouraged by the army, as they added cheer and entertainment to it in its exile.

On the thirteenth of November began a three-days' celebration by the Chinese of the Empress Dowager's birthday. Against the Drum Tower and the Bell Tower, which are the main features of the streets of all Chinese capitals, large shrines were erected over the archways leading through these towers, enclosing tablets inscribed with the characters "Wan-

shou," which, like "Ban-zai," means "ten thousand ages." These shrines were hung with beautiful lanterns, and before the tablets were placed food offerings and incense. Hundreds of fancy lanterns and transparencies, bearing congratulatory inscriptions, were hung out by the shops in the main streets. It was curious to find shortly after these decorations were completed that the streets were all deserted, for not even on such an occasion do the Chinese venture out at night. After a few admiring looks at their beautiful handiwork, and its bewitching effect by night, they disappeared behind the shutters and barricaded the doors of their shops and houses, as though they had expected some Oriental Godiva in their picturesque streets.

The visitor riding through these solemn aisles might easily imagine himself in an enchanted land and feel himself transported to the opposite pole. Not even the flight of a Cossack messenger with his skirts whipping against his boots could dissolve the vision.

On the sixteenth, it being the seventy-first birthday of the Empress Dowager of China, the streets were filled with flags and streamers. The Tartar general and territorial officials visited the ancestral palace in the deserted Forbidden City and performed the ceremony of kowtowing before the Dowager's tablet. At all the dynastic shrines about "China's Second Capital" prayers were said for ten days. The expenses of the birthday celebration were subscribed by the native guilds.

Coming at such a time this demonstration had a peculiar significance. The officials of the five Boards and the Tartar general, whose functions were nearly annulled, were mourning over the condition of the Empire and condoling with each other over the embarrassment of their situation. They were awaiting from year to year the promised restoration of their functions, but in the end saw the country turned over

to warring invaders. From Peking they received private advice warning them that the Emperor was increasingly inane, sickly, and insignificant; that the Dowager was thinner and older, perfunctory in her foreign relations and omitting former courtesies. The old age of the Empress Dowager coinciding with an era of pressing foreign complications promised a season of bitterness. This prospect was relieved by one hope. A new but corrupt Board of War had been established in Peking. It was a sorry promise for the future, for it may be said that war is indeed to a Chinese the very last hope.

The crime against humanity in Manchuria was not, strictly speaking, the result of the contact between Eastern and Western civilization, for the reason that the main parties concerned were innocent victims. China was incompetent in Manchuria, but not necessarily criminal, and the Chinese were the victims of a crime due to Russian conquest and not far removed from that of human slavery.

The Tartar general was a good-natured man and fully equal to the exercise of a wide hospitality demanded of him. His influence did not extend much beyond the walls of the City of Mukden, but at least three sacred places outside of the city of which he was the responsible custodian were respected by the Russian army. One of these places was the Eastern Tombs at Fu-ling; another, the Northern Tombs; and the third, the Imperial Temples and Confucian Temple outside the west gate.

As custodian of Imperial property he entertained thousands of visitors to the Forbidden City in Mukden, and to the Imperial Tombs. In the Forbidden City were still many valuable and interesting relics of Manchuria's last Emperors. The Imperial Temple, the Throne, and some buildings that had been occupied by the Imperial family were still in a good state of preservation and excited the wonder of visi-

tors. There were no eunuchs as at Peking, but the Tartar general's subordinates escorted strangers over the premises. A valuable library had been taken from the city by the Russians in 1900, and placed in the Imperial University in St. Petersburg, and in all probability this act will be charged up against Russia in China's future dealings with her. There were many valuable art objects stored in the Forbidden City, consisting of porcelain, jade, books, and paintings. The groves of the Imperial Tombs were far removed from the traffic of the city streets and were resorted to for rest and recreation. Between the Northern Tombs and the Yellow Temple was a "quei-kung" (Chinese mortuary) where the dead were kept for a period, sometimes even for years, in heavy wooden coffins on the ground (frequently protected by light vaults of brick) until a time for burial counted favorable or lucky by the Chinese. When the cold came and the army was hard pressed for shelter, the little Chinese house of the keeper and watchman of these premises was pre-empted by soldiers who quartered horses in the door plot, and from day to day hacked up the coffins for fuel and lived in the sunshine and wind and dust amid a congregation of an hundred corpses in all stages of decay.

At the Yellow Temple outside the West Gate where the Lama Buddhists of Mongolia held their solemn services and incantations, great crowds of soldiers and officers gathered. At their services soldiers belonging to the Tartar tribe came to worship. A Star Festival was held, when the constellations were worshiped by incantations, the burning of incense and the explosion of fireworks. In the height of this performance when the fireworks had gotten well under way and all the Lamas were standing about enjoying the spectacle, the Russian guards rushed in and arrested the poor novices who were attending to the fireworks. It turned out that they were afraid that the forage which they possessed

## *The Army Base in Winter*

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in large stores in the Temple compounds was in danger of fire.

The celebration of the Animal Dance, a ceremony surviving the ancient nature worship, fell on a brilliant, sunny day, and was the event of the winter in the Chinese life of Mukden, so far as the foreigners were concerned.

At the Chinese New Year, the Chinese women are permitted by custom to dress in their choice finery and to parade in public, a ceremony which greatly pleased the foreigners who were thus able to get a view of native life they could not get at any other time.

The Dragon Festival took the form of a parade by a society which makes it a business to carry an image of this sacred legendary animal fifty to a hundred feet in length, each year through the streets, collecting tribute from the merchants to whom the presence of the Dragon brings success for the year.

When the trees were naked and all the bloom of summer gone, the dust seemed to increase and swept along in great clouds over the gray-black roofs of the city. The bleakness of the earth was only relieved by the glorifying sky. The cold sometimes became intense, and the wayfarer bundled in winter wrappings rode, partly carried by his horse, partly blown by the wind, through the crooked streets approaching the inner city. If he passed around by the moat, he traversed at the southwest corner of the wall an area over which were scattered the skinned carcasses of dogs. Some flung into the moat were frozen in the ice, with occasionally here and there one in a lifelike attitude as though its spirit was just a little way above its head and still conjuring it to free itself from the crows pulling at its seared and naked frame. It was a picture of Manchuria. Beyond this was waste ground, abandoned to garbage.

If the wayfarer took the route through the South Gate

he found himself in a jam of traffic, besieged by carts and wagons and by native vendors. The scene here was animated, brilliant, and barbaric, and it took half an hour to pass through the main street and reach the foreign quarter inside the South Gate, where the Russian hotel, the bank, the native post-office were located, and also the native inns in which one could always find companions of his own nationality.

In such a visit one might gather some knowledge of what the Eastern Empire meant to Mukden. All the caravan traffic of normal times suspended; the city surrendered to a foreign military holding its gates and parading its streets and keeping a surveillance over its proud dignitaries; an uncertain communication with Peking, and yet more uncertain traffic in contraband merchandise, over one solitary highway—the Hsin-min-t'un road; a lavish expenditure of Russian paper money of a constantly depreciating value; an uncertain destiny, and an immediate danger from a great army whose forerunners had already struck terror from Port Arthur to Blagovetschensk four years before—for it was not known, and the Chinese hardly dared to contemplate, what would become of the city in case of a desperate battle there.

While the Russians were waiting for a battle they did not neglect to enjoy themselves. In the foreign quarter, inside the South Gate, were several up-to-date bakeries and shops where fine food could be bought. Liquors could be had everywhere and in quantity. From the South Gate through the city to the railway station were scattered food shops and restaurants. Around the West Gate and in the buildings of the temples outside, and in all the plain surrounding the settlement, were officers' quarters to which men resorted with their comrades and beguiled the weary weeks of exile. Near the railway station the Economic Society had its stores

## *The Army Base in Winter*

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of officers' supplies displayed in railway carriages and on the ground beside the tracks. Here the officers and soldiers were waited upon according to lot, and stood throughout the day in long lines waiting their turn. A visit to the "Economica" was one of the events of the soldier's life in Manchuria. The officers' day at Mukden would consist of shopping at the "Economica," a jaunt through the streets of the native city, with purchases of native trinkets, dinner at a restaurant or at the station buffet, and a game of Piquet, and the night's carouse, if he happened to fall in with friends. In the minds of those who participated in the Russian campaign must long endure the memory of winter days in Mukden—days of icy streets, dust, outlandish traffic; and nights of gambling, rumor, work, lawlessness, and rude but welcome comfort.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### LIFE ON THE SHA-HO

ON the morning of the eighteenth of October the Grand Army did not appear to expect any further fighting until it could recuperate. Kouropatkin had decided to rest, and the army had decided that therefore the Japanese would rest. Considering that Oyama and the commanders before him had, during the whole war, been running the show, the confidence they thus ingenuously reposed in their own chief was nearly amusing. For the moment they forgot Kouropatkin's bombastic proclamation of a fortnight before. Many of them took occasion to get drunk, which was indeed a sincere celebration of the restoration of quiet.

In the afternoon at the headquarters of the Western Army several of the officers were ill from the effects of their libations. Notwithstanding their terrible headaches, stomach-aches, fevers, and loss of appetite, they were exuberant and very kind. They were all in bed. One, a doctor, hearing a donkey braying, cried with great effort, "Ban-zai," and then all laughed. I spent the night on some straw in the only vacant corner of the room and went to sleep while they were still laughing at their joke and bandying jests.

At 8:30 on the morning of the nineteenth I left the Western Army and started to cross to the east to see the entire position in which the army was now installed. South of Pai-t'a-p'u, where, on the seventeenth, the soldiers had dug themselves into the ground, it was now quiet. Only an occasional gun could be heard. From behind Pootiloff and

Novgorod soldiers could be seen gathering kao-liang between the lines. I rode along some distance with a soldier who was going out with a horse to bring back a load of fodder, and we passed a dead Chinese who had been lately killed. The soldiers sometimes ventured very close to the Japanese lines. In some places the grain was all gathered away and the soldiers of the two armies often arrived within hailing distance while foraging and learned not to fire on each other when on a peaceful mission. For the most part the marks of battle had been cleared away between Pootiloff and the Pagoda Hill at Er-ta-kou. Pagoda Hill was quiet and the garrison there had dug themselves caves in the earth.

Farther east, at the little Village of Wa-tzu-yu, I found a hospitable family of Chinese. As I approached their house a Caucasian Cossack was chasing a pig in the street, and having failed to kill it with his saber he used that weapon to beat an old man and to threaten an old woman, both so aged and frail that they could hardly walk, and who were trying to escape by clinging to a mud wall at the side of the street to aid them in hobbling along. It was an excellent example of the deadly parallel: here was a complete savage harassing two perfectly innocent and perfectly helpless specimens of a civilization whose dominant idea is reverence for the aged. When I arrived at the spot and stopped, the Cossack desisted and rode away. As an illustration of the warlike qualifications of the Caucasian it bears out the opinion held in other parts of the army that they are those of the outlaw and robber.

On the twentieth I reached the Eastern Army, passing through Keng-ta-jen-shan (Kandolisan) in the morning, and arriving at the mountain position at Pien-chia-p'u-tzu at noon. The Japanese were making some demonstrations in the valley beyond, and the Russian infantry was moving about in the crevices of the mountains of their position, and

while I was resting on the mountainside, a battery took up its position commanding the opposite side of the valley. The line was divided at this point by a short rifle range and the soldiers complained of continual sniping going on. Pien-chia-p'u-tzu was the apex of a triangle around which the Japanese were facing the Russians for fifteen miles. Beyond this position of the Eastern Army, the line was defined by the pass of Kao-t'ou-ling and Ta-ling in the far east. The pressing question of going into winter quarters was speedily solved by the weather. The cold was now already too great for living in tents. The troops began busily constructing earth-houses in the hillsides and in the ravines and fields, and in strengthening their positions to the utmost for winter security, began to approach each other, at Pootiloff especially, by siege works. The diligence of the Japanese sappers was such that Kouropatkin ordered the work of intrenchment in his own army to be carried on day and night. Each morning revealed new works that had been constructed by both sides overnight. The armies were in plain view of each other from the hilltops where their observatories were located. From Kuan-shan and Pagoda Hill the camp-fires of many Japanese bivouacs could be seen. With the field-glasses the Japanese could be seen digging their trenches, dropping and picking up their tools and shifting from one part of the field to another.

On the Pagoda Hill the Japanese kept almost continually breaking shrapnel, a few at a time. Both sides kept up a certain amount of artillery fire to annoy the siege operations of the other.

There were several villages between the lines where the Chinese refused to be driven out, and were visited from time to time by both the Japanese and Russian outposts. They received periodical fusillades into their houses, when they quietly awaited a more favorable opportunity to venture into

their fields. One village in front of Pagoda Hill was, as though by mutual consent, never shelled by either side.

But for the most part, in every quarter except the Pooti-loff-Novgorod Hill, and Lin-shen-p'u, where also the Russian and Japanese troops were within a few hundred yards of each other, the armies were constructing winter quarters. The native houses in many cases were torn down to prevent infection and zemlyankas—or dugouts—constructed of new timber, matting, and fodder. These dwellings were nearly invisible from the plain.

Many of the reserve troops were permitted to utilize the native houses in the rear of the position, but along the position even the largest market towns were leveled to the earth, and the soldiers cut down all the trees. On a warm day they could be seen with broadaxes hacking down timber that had been the pride of the region for years, both in the villages and the graveyards.

As the weeks went by and re-enforcements arrived in large numbers, the country had the appearance of being stricken with a great blight. With the first cold snap the Chinese, who had fled to Mukden, bethought themselves to return and save a part of their fodder-fuel, and even of their crops. But they found these, in many cases, already gathered up by the soldiers. The region became a desert, dotted with bivouacs in every direction, where, on a warm day, the soldiers were seen lounging about camp, cooking their food, mending their clothing, and even bathing under the warm sun.

A few Chinese just behind the line had the courage to remain to guard their property, but were unable to prevent the soldiers from carrying away their doors and windows, and even their wooden utensils. Their wood disappeared into fortifications, bridges, zemlyankas or camp-fires. Hundreds of families in the plain west of the railway took alarm during

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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the progress of the battle and fled to Mukden, but within a week were able to return—many of them to their homes.

With the soldiers working night and day the transformation of the position very soon became complete. In a fortnight the soldiers relinquished their tents for dugouts, in which they constructed many ingenious conveniences, such as stoves, which they built of the immense water jars found in the Chinese houses. In some instances tents were walled up and enclosed with millet stalks, forming a house around the tent. In the mountains the native houses were few and generally remodeled for the use of the officers. In some large towns that were relay posts or etaphs, where markets were desired, the houses of the natives were protected and the natives induced to remain and bring in produce from the surrounding region for the use of the armies. The troops at such places took to the fields in the outskirts where their little zemlyanka settlements resembled the native Chinese graveyards with little spirals of smoke rising from them like the incense which the Chinese burns at the tombs of his ancestors. To see these mounds under a covering of snow, emitting smoke like miniature volcanoes, suggested to the mind that the dead had come to life and were enlarging their narrow cells into habitations and homes.

The troops were redistributed along the line of defense, and when the fortifications were strong enough so that the line could be more easily held, the re-enforcements which the army was constantly receiving went into quarters in the rear of the position nearer the army base—some of them in reserve. At Pai-t'a-p'u, on the Imperial road immediately south of Mukden, were quarters for nearly half an army corps. General Kouropatkin established his headquarters at the Village of Chang-shang-mu-t'un, near the station of Ku-chia-tzü on the Fu-shun railway. In the vicinity large commissariat supplies were stored, and in a

village near Chang-shang-mu-t'un the headquarters field-hospital of the army Red Cross was established. Chang-shang-mu-t'un was connected with the position at Er-ta-kou by a wide military road such as had never before existed in the region. Leading to the right through Pai-t'a-p'u and Su-chia-t'un was a similar road connecting the extreme right flank, and another road connected with the southeast. A similar road was built from the terminus of the Fu-shun railway on the extreme east, up the valley of the Shi River, and a grade was constructed for a field railway all the way to Ta-ling.

While at Pootiloff the combatants were not more than six hundred paces apart, in the east the cavalry of the two armies roamed over a region twenty-five miles in width, where skirmishes continued throughout the winter. The country was for the most part rough and wild and the scene of many little tragedies between scouts of both armies who spent much of the winter in exploration. Before winter had set in the cart roads were marked at frequent intervals by solitary graves, a cross indicating that of a Cossack, a post or stone that of a Japanese. One came upon lonely graves in the mountain passes overlooking some great expanse of ragged mountain, where the wind stirred the dry and withered wreath of wild flowers placed by the Cossacks upon the last resting place of a comrade.

Manchuria is a land of sunshine, and invigorating but bitter winds in winter. When the snow lay on the mountains and the streams were frozen and the natives retired into their huts, the region between the two armies at this place was forbidding and terrible, and the otherwise quiet valleys were most of them the scene of some special cruelty. A Cossack trooper told of coming upon the dead body of a Japanese cavalryman at a frozen stream where he stopped to water his pony. For some distance the Japanese had dragged

himself through the snow, which was marked with blood, showing that he had been wounded, and had crawled down to the ice to get a drink. There he had frozen, partly raised upon his elbow and in one hand clasping a little photograph of two children.

Such was the nature of warfare between the outposts over the whole line that no assistance could be rendered the individual who was unfortunate enough to be wounded between the lines. At the same time truces were frequently made in the center where General Kouropatkin and Marshal Oyama exchanged communications and the Russian and Japanese officers fraternized over Russian and foreign wines. In January some officers of the Fourth Corps rode down to see the Japanese without even a white flag. They were well received, all drank Japanese saki—and drank too much. They had their photographs taken, and when the visit was finished the Japanese sent them safely back and promised to return the call.

At the beginning of winter water became scarce on the position and both armies were compelled to resort to the Sha-ho. Here the Japanese and Russian soldiers met and exchanged cigarettes and trinkets, and for the time being it was understood by both sides that an unarmed man was not to be fired on by either side. At Lin-shen-p'u, just west of the railway, the lines were so close together that the belligerents could hear each other talk. The Russian band, which played every day or two in the Russian trenches, was encored by the Japanese with shouts of "Ochin horosho!" "Horosho ruskoe!"—Very good! Good boys! At the same time if one lifted his head above the intrenchments he was sure to be received with a fusillade, and occasionally the recreations of both sides were punctuated by the explosion of ground mines or a general bombardment.

At night the Russians and Japanese rushed upon each



W. W. Greikoff  
Generalissimus of the Russian Army  
& General of the Guards.

General Greikoff (autograph), who was severely criticised by Kouropatkin for failure to operate against Nogi in the battle of Mukden, thus depriving the army of valuable information of Nogi's flank attack



other's trenches, a kind of warfare that gained nothing to either side, but which kept both armies on the *qui vive*. Both spent weeks and months upon ingenious plans to deceive each other. When one manifestation occurred the entire line would be warned against attack. Any demonstration by the enemy meant some operation in a secret place. On one occasion the Japanese concentrated a very heavy fire upon Pootiloff in the night. The Russians, suspecting that this was intended to cover the construction of fortifications which the Japanese were suspected of making on a hill of their own, shelled the hill and dashed forward with their Cossacks. They reached a Japanese battery which they overpowered but were unable to take before the Japanese were re-enforced.

It was natural that there should be many rumors during the course of the winter regarding the plans and intentions of the enemy. They were frequently reported to be about ready to attack. About the time of the above incident, which happened in November, it was rumored that the Japanese intended to attack on December 6th. As if to anticipate this, the Russian artillery began firing in the morning and continued throughout the day. In addition to their long-range siege-guns, which were now being brought to the position, large mortars were used at Lin-shen-p'u and Pootiloff. These bombardments never had any important results. Following their doctrine that the enemy was destroyed by great masses of projectiles, the Russian artillery for the most part devoted itself to plane firing, and during the winter managed to cover with projectiles most of the Japanese position within range of their artillery. The Japanese followed to a considerable extent the method of ebb and flow in their firing, and by this means covered the ground, and also without locating their target. In the hills the landmarks were fixed and immova-

ble, and distances could be gauged and targets located with comparative ease. In the plain on the Russian side the position was made into a monotonous waste. To render the maps obsolete, whole villages were removed and trees cut down so that there would be no landmarks whatever to serve as a guide to the enemy. Lookouts were built out of poles in open places in the plain so as to be almost invisible at a distance. The artillery was placed in pits, as were the wire entanglements before redoubts. While at Liao-yang redoubts were raised to great heights above the ground and plain, they were on the Sha-ho placed as low as possible so as to disguise their location.

The Japanese had several eminences on their side of the Sha-ho which they used to advantage and which were an annoyance to the Russians throughout the winter. Southwest of Lin-shen-p'u was a raised quadrangle about twenty feet high, on which was the remains of a temple. It was a target for the Russian artillery, which could never make any effect upon it. At Hsu-lin-tzü, on the railway, the Japanese had a water tank about fifty feet high which they used as an observatory. It was a large object and a most exasperating target to the Russian artillerists, who fired at it all winter. Hardly a day passed that they did not take a shot at it, but without being able to hit it. During the winter about two hundred siege-guns of large caliber and long range were added to the artillery force of the Grand Army. They were unloaded at Su-chia-t'un and moved by night to positions back of Lin-shen-p'u, and between the railway and Pootiloff.

Artillery positions were marked out every place behind the lines, and at nightfall the field-guns shifted their positions to the rear to escape night surprises. Each morning about four o'clock they were moved forward again for the day. In November both sides began using searchlights. Each army was gauging its activity by that of the enemy. On

the Russian side such innovations meant that the Japanese re-enforcements were larger than reported, that they had quickened their communications, and that they were ready to attack. To offset the Russian strong position at Lin-shen-p'u, which was like a fortress, the Japanese turned Hsulin-tzü and the south bank of the Sha River into one great redoubt.

As soon as either side got any large guns they proceeded to test them upon the enemy's position. As the winter progressed the Russians made accurate calculations of the zones that were in the range of the different Japanese artillery. In November they planted four large guns near Pootiloff and straightway proceeded to try them upon the Japanese position, partly with the idea of eliciting a response from any large guns the Japanese might in the meantime have received, but mostly to annoy them in some new place.

Su-chia-t'un was a place whose location was accurately known to the Japanese because it was a railway siding. It was the terminal for the trains and a kind of base for the Western Army. By way of the old railway embankment leading off to the west a spur line was laid during the winter to Ma-tu-ran, in the direction of Chan-tan. From Su-chia-t'un trains also departed for that place. It was a depot for munitions especially, and as it was visited by many officers it had a restaurant where many dinners were given. As the range of the Japanese guns appeared to increase they were much discussed during the festivities at this place. One day when it was certain that the Japanese had had time to bring up some of their siege-guns from Port Arthur, some one solemnly announced that they could now shoot to Su-chia-t'un, and there was more drinking than ever. This restaurant was a dugout with the roof just at the top of the ground. Wells were dug on the west and north for windows, which admitted the daylight, and at night it was lighted by smoky

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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lamps, but no lights were visible from the direction of the position. The top of the door was below the level of the ground and reached by a stairway cut in the earth.

Just behind the positions a village was left intact for each division staff. Some of these villages became model Russian towns. The officers brought glass from Mukden for the windows, made ceilings and walls, and built Russian stoves of brick. The Russian officers were very fond of animal life and bought poodle dogs, guinea pigs, and birds to put in them. Along the position where the officers lived in dugouts they made floors, walls, and ceilings with the fine rush mats which Chinese make in such large quantities. These zemlyankas, or dugouts, were large enough for two cots and a table placed at one end opposite the door and under the window. They were generally flooded with sunshine by day, and many of the officers had oil lamps to cheer the loneliness of the winter nights in their wild homes.

Before the works of the main position were completed, second and third lines of defense were built in the rear. All forage was commandeered and more and more of the Chinese were crowded out of their homes as time went on and as the army increased in size. The Chinese learned to take out the timber from their houses and sell it, and it was pitiable to see them thus dismantling their homes for the mere pittance they might receive for the timber. It induced Kouropatkin to forbid the destruction of more houses by either the Chinese or the soldiers, but the order was not obeyed.

An order was put in force that no Chinese could go south across the Hun River in the plain, and, although a few were permitted to remain in their houses by ingratiating themselves with the officers, it was only rarely in that region that a Chinese could be seen. Occasionally at a distance a blue-cotton-clothed figure might be seen bending down gathering

fuel. But the acme of desolation seemed to be reached when the Russian soldiers turned out in the fields to gather for fuel the very stubble of the crops which the Chinese had left, and the weeds that had grown between.

The branch railways were connected with the position by field railways, known as Decauville railways. One of these connected a magazine on the Ma-tu-ran line, just west of Su-chia-t'un, with the heavy artillery behind Lin-shen-p'u, to which place it transported ammunition and stores. The Ma-tu-ran Railway intersected Su-hu-chia-p'u and was finally extended to Ma-tu-ran, which was the center of several strong positions on the Hun River protecting Mukden. The region during the winter was the scene of numerous remarkable exploits on the part of the Japanese cavalry. It was not uncommon for the army to wake up upon a bright morning and find a Japanese scouting party in some abandoned village far inside their lines. The Fifty-second Dragoons, not far from Su-hu-chia-p'u encountered and captured one of these parties, consisting of three privates and an officer, but not until the officer and one private were killed, when the two remaining privates had no longer any power to resist. The Dragoons were so impressed with the bravery of the Japanese officer that they carried his body to their camp and buried it beside some old Chinese monuments and placed an inscription over it in three languages. An officer who led me to this spot explained that should the Japanese take the position from them they would be able to identify the remains. This was at a time when the fame of the Japanese as chivalrous victors had percolated the whole army.

At Ma-tu-ran one of the veteran cavalry generals, Greikoff, was stationed. With him was General \_\_\_\_\_, who had never been able to conquer his antipathy to the Japanese. He was a most wonderful comrade, and not the least interesting of his talents was his ability to mimic the

ways of the Japanese. He could almost impersonate them, though he was a very tall man with blond whiskers. It was very funny, especially in view of the fact that he had always been unmercifully trounced by the Japanese and, as I will describe later, participated in some of the greatest misfortunes which the army endured in the battle of Mukden. He was one of the best examples I had met of a man actuated by race patriotism or prejudice. Men of this type wherever found are among the very best of men, and go farther in the solution of difficulties between races than the men whose prejudices remain to be created. In all the Russian army I was not able to identify more than one man who at the end of the war professed contempt for the Japanese. He had lived in Japan as an officer of his government, but his views were so unwelcome among his fellows toward the end of the war that it was an unpleasant matter to express them.

General \_\_\_\_\_, with his Orenberg Cossacks, had carried out some daring expeditions in the rear of the Japanese left, and succeeded in damaging the Japanese railway. At his headquarters were several doctors and medical students whose mess we visited in the evening and then dined at the staff mess at noon the following day. There seemed to have been special preparations, which was surprising, considering that their guest was only a passing visitor. I was given a place of honor at their long mess table and just opposite the headquarters chaplain who, of course, was a priest of the Orthodox Church, wearing long hair and a rich brown cassock. He was a man with a very benevolent face and a kind eye, and not at all an abstainer. Among my medical acquaintances of the day before was one very clownish surgeon who kept the table in roars of laughter. Considering the misfortunes of the campaign, their exile in a strange land, their distresses at home, and the conflicting convictions

which they held, their good-fellowship was remarkable. It was not long until we all separated. I cannot help but think that they owed nothing to me and that I shall perhaps always remain obliged to them through a debt which I can never pay, unless they can feel that an expression of gratitude and the testimony of pleasant memories in a mere book can compensate them for their hospitality.

General \_\_\_\_\_ was very proud of his camp, which he explained in detail, and on the following morning when I started away he accompanied me to say good-by to General Greikoff and then rode with me a couple of miles out of camp. He was very proud of a white Arabian charger which he had, all of whose points and characteristics he knew and pointed out with the enthusiasm of a cadet.

Farther west, with his headquarters at San-t'ai-tzu, was General Kossakovsky with a cavalry force guarding the region between the Hun and the Liao rivers. This was the force that shortly became a division under General Mischenko. The region here, like all of western Manchuria, contained many fortified hamlets and villages. There were many detached houses, hardly deserving the name of hamlets, but every important family had its premises walled like a miniature city. These enclosures were square with look-outs at the corners and sometimes towers with connecting passages along the inside of the walls where watchmen could pass from one tower to the other. In some cases moats surrounded these compounds and the entrance was guarded by two pairs of heavy wooden doors. The outer doors led into a court where carts and implements were sometimes kept; and the second opened into the stables, granary, and the dwellings themselves.

The country people in these regions are often persecuted by thieves, which partly accounts for these attempts to make themselves secure. But the depredations carried on both by

the Boxers and the Russian troops in 1900 and the years of occupation following, account for a large part of these walled hamlets. As a matter of fact the people are very peaceful, and being easily plundered, invite depredations. Especially in recent years, when foreign traders have at intervals introduced foreign arms, the people in the valley close to the Liao River have been victimized by the worst elements, who are always in such countries the first to profit by the introduction of firearms.

The country was rich in forage and the army position was not extended beyond the Hun in such a way as to interfere with the Chinese remaining in their homes. The Cossacks inhabited it almost unmolested by the Japanese, who only ventured in small scouting parties into the region by night, disappearing often to the far north and returning in the same mysterious way. An occasional pitched battle occurred where the Japanese were found to take shelter in a village, but was not often carried to a conclusion. These were days of rest for the armies. The Japanese formed their position with a convex line to the enemy, not venturing far on either flank. The Russian army kept a concave front slightly enclosing the Japanese position, and having a cavalry of superior numbers, were able to guard their flanks with ease.

The most interesting defenses in the Russian position were at the Pagoda Hill, the Pootiloff-Novogorod Hill, and at Lin-shen-p'u. At Lin-shen-p'u long zigzag trenches led to the main redoubt on the very bank of the Sha and ended among the wreck of the buildings. The two positions were so close that during the winter each antagonist carried on mining operations to blow up the other's redoubts.

The rear of the hill of Novogorod was so precipitous that the zemlyankas were one above another in such a way that the roof of one formed the doorstep of the one above it.

The garrison there dwelt virtually in caves. The southern face of the hill sloped gently toward the enemy and was zigzagged with trenches leading three or four hundred yards down the slope toward similar trenches of the Japanese. In this most advanced position throughout the winter the Russian riflemen toyed with the Japanese sharpshooters by setting up dummy soldiers for them to shoot at, so well constructed that with a powerful glass they could not be distinguished from men. The Japanese no doubt did the same. But these frolics by days were varied by frequent bombardments which were persistently breaking up their earthworks, and also by bayonet charges by night, when they temporarily turned each other out of their trenches.

The Pagoda Hill was as precipitous as Novogorod. Pootiloff, called by the Japanese "Lone Tree Hill," because of a solitary tree that stood there throughout the war, was a large round-top hill, the southern front of which was criss-crossed with defenses of every nature. A road led across the Sha from the north into the crevices of the hill where the army soup wagons drove to feed the soldiers. So many shells of all kinds fell at this place that the ground was never at any time entirely cleared of them. The shell of a shrapnel projectile does not always burst, but when the shrapnel bullets are discharged from it, occasionally falls to the ground an empty cylinder. It was intended that these should be kept gathered up, but as one rode along in the crevices and on the road just behind the hill these shells could be seen scattered everywhere. The men remained close to their defenses, but a warm sunny day would bring them all out, and they could be seen sitting in the works mending their clothes and playing games.

Where the trenches crossed the backs of the ridges the soldiers kept carefully below the surface, but in the crevices and ravines, where high breastworks were built, deeply

faced with brush entanglements and barbed wire, they paraded with their shoulders above the parapet, though they were generally invisible against the hill background. In these trenches the men received many head and hand wounds while firing their rifles, which were kept lying, with bayonets fixed, thickly along the top of the parapet. The men lived in bomb-proofs underneath.

On the very pinnacle of Novogorod the officers had their zemlyanka lookout. It was a little lower than the summit of Pootiloff, but commanded a precisely similar view of the Japanese position, which was a slope of monotonous fallow land leaping up to the dim distance. Only such movements as the Japanese evidently desired to make known were ever to be seen by day throughout their zone. Any phenomena in the Japanese position immediately excited in the Russian lookout an inspection of the entire region. Here were stationed not only the officers of the troops in the fortifications, but the officers of the artillery scattered in the plain. The business of war at this part of the position became one of exciting speculation. There were no less than two officers at all times in the lookout, framing reports, telephoning to their commanders, and working out the problems of the position. Though it was impossible in a military sense to relax their vigilance, these officers received the visitor with evident interest. They would step out in the embrasure and point out the enemy's position, though at times every moment spent outside of a bomb-proof was a moment of anxiety, and some of the officers serving in this post showed the anxiety in their faces. Between four thousand and five thousand soldiers had been killed and wounded at this spot before the opening of the battle of Mukden. It may be said that the slopes here, where the Russians now had their intrenchments, had run with blood, and there was a high daily average of killed and

wounded at this part of the position throughout the entire winter.

At the time the Pootiloff-Novgorod position was taken from the Japanese the Russian commanders in the fight quarreled over the spoil. Pootiloff's partisans claimed the right to name the "Lone Tree Hill," while their opponents declared that General Pootiloff was not present at the battle. It was attempted to compromise upon the name "Mamalon," that of an officer who distinguished himself in the action. General Pootiloff was transferred to Vladivostok, where he was given the command of two regiments of the fortress troops, and his opponents in the fight to recapture Pootiloff asserted that he had been removed from the army of the south for incompetency. The hill, however, took its name from him notwithstanding that Mamalon was a colonel who had lost his life.

It is difficult to realize with what intense relief dawn was welcomed by the tenants of this position. At dark pickets were sent out toward the Japanese lines to positions that had been selected during the day, and under the cover of night the most diabolical strategies were put in operation. The pickets disappeared and were supposed to be occasionally captured by the Japanese, though later in the winter an occasional body could be seen pulled about by homeless dogs between the lines. Several times during the winter the Japanese assaulted the position during the night, while the Russian defenders retaliated with bayonet charges from which they hoped and claimed great results, never fully realized. Dawn brought relief and rest. When the night lifted and the remaining pickets returned to the citadel the feelings of the soldiers and their commanders must have been something like the feelings of the men of the garrisons at Port Arthur, who were invested in the same way.

The officers were worried about the Port Arthur arti-

lery, whose arrival was due, and which they were anxious to locate. Its strength was only fully known at the beginning of the battle of Mukden, when it was found to consist of a battery of eleven-inch siege guns commanding not only Pootiloff and Novogorod, but Kuan-shan, Er-ta-kou and the Pagoda Hill. This was the only respect in which the Japanese position was more formidable than the Russian. The Russian facilities for defense were complete. The vast and intricate works in front of the Japanese were connected with the main line railway traversing the entire rear of the army at the Hun by more than three hundred kilometers of the Decauville lines. Each army corps had one of these lines over which it carried ammunition and stores, and during the battle that followed conveyed the wounded to the hospital trains kept standing opposite Fushun, Chang-shang-mu-t'un (Kouropatkin's headquarters), Su-chia-t'un and Ma-tu-ran.

Back of Pagoda Hill was the hill Kuan-shan where the officers of the Fourth Corps and of General Kouropatkin's staff sometimes gathered in crowds on a bright day to watch the wonderful phenomena of the position where the two great armies were watching each other with such vigilance, and awaiting the passing of winter. Mounted on a tripod on the crest of the hill was one of those powerful binocles, erected there to reveal the enemy's flagstaffs and horsemen, and any other object of importance within fifteen miles, and through it the officers took turns in inspecting the position. It was frequently turned upon Pootiloff and Novogorod to see the effect of the enemy's shells there, which might be at the time throwing up great clouds of dust. Behind Kuan-shan in a village of the same name was the Fourth Corps base. At the bottom of the hill the engineers had a depot where were piled up quantities of scaling implements, *chevaux-de-frise*, barbed wire, and other engineers'

supplies. The place had several shops run by sutlers, and a restaurant similar to the one at Su-chia-t'un. There was a central telegraph which communicated with every part of the position and was the main station between Ta-ling and the Liao River, collecting and communicating endless reports to the commander-in-chief five miles in the rear. The commissariat stores, officers' quarters, and a garrison of two or three companies filled up the native building, and a few artillery parks were stationed in the fields on the outskirts. A road led from the village over a little pass on the hill Kuan-shan and the Pagoda Hill on the right, descended into the valley of the Sha-ho and led back of the foothills guarded by Mischenko to the position of the Eastern Army. A number of the foreign military agents lived at Kuan-shan, where they had their international mess.

The monotony of life in the cantonments was enlivened by certain festivals and what the British would call gym-kanas. The mounted troops held race meetings, and the men and soldiers of all branches of the army held gymnastic contests, especially intended to make the men cheerful, and followed them with festivities and amusing theatricals.

The soldiers were without sufficient clothing and suffered many hardships during the winter, sometimes having only one meal daily, and compelled to bivouac on occasion in the ice and snow. The winter on the Sha-ho more than the summer campaign in the mud and rains showed the valuable military qualities of patience and hardihood of the Russian soldiers. They collected and stored all the crops which the Chinese had left behind in the fields, conserved the food and fuel found in the villages, and received with resignation the Chinese-made cotton clothing in lieu of new woolen uniforms expected from the "Little Father," who would have been glad to supply them had he been able to do so. Periodically the army received gifts from the Empress.

These consisted of food, clothing and comfits, uniformly distributed among the officers and men.

The arrival of the *Manchurian Army Viestnik* from Mukden, received daily at the corps headquarters, could hardly be called an event, although this was the official organ of the commander-in-chief. The paper was regarded among many of the officers as "a droll sheet," for it contained only such dispatches as the general staff considered suitable to the common soldier, and its department of news was chronically poverty-stricken. It was usually printed on Chinese paper, but whether on Chinese or Russian paper, one side was as a rule left blank. Officers who had waited sometimes weeks for their home mail, anxious to know the opinions of the outside world, and the result of the riots at home, would turn the sheet over and wonder what the censor had excluded. The Harbin and Vladivostok papers contained stories of the battlefield; but the arrival of home papers and letters bearing news of the revolution, and giving the Government's attitude toward the continuation of the war, was an event most anxiously anticipated.

But the moujik, or volunteer, or officer, most to be envied, was he who received a box from home. Comfits and delicacies such as these boxes contained were not to be obtained in Manchuria, except with great difficulty at Harbin or Vladivostok. The arrival and the opening was an event. If it did not contain vodka it called for its benediction, and a celebration in honor of the arrival took place. It was seldom that an officer so favored failed to call his comrades about him and to lavish his treasures upon them. It was a period of personal exploit and adventure for a few, but of monotonous routine for the body of the army.

In the beginning of November Kourpatkin was made commander-in-chief of all the naval and land forces, and signified his acceptance of his new responsibilities by the

adoption of a special headquarters flag, which excited an interest immediately eclipsed by the excitement over the North Sea incident, in which the Baltic Fleet en route to restore the sea power of the Eastern Empire attacked the British fishing fleet in the North Sea. The adventures of this fleet, under Rodjestvensky, from the moment it set sail until the battle of the Sea of Japan, when it disappeared, and for long after, was the main theme of interest. Poems by officers of the fleet describing the patriotism of the crews and forecasting future victory were printed in the *Manchurian Army Viestnik*. The continued resistance of Port Arthur inspired some with the belief that Rodjestvensky's fleet might recover the honor of the navy.

The diversions of the common soldier were very simple. Around his little fire he listened to stories of fisticuffs with the Japanese soldiers, or the swapping of jackknives and cigarettes at some water-hole in the ice between the lines; or of the adventures of a dismounted scout crawling on hands and knees between the lines; or of nearly forgotten adventures in the south before the defeat at Liao-yang. The moujik listened to some soldier among them who could laboriously read the *Manchurian Army Viestnik*, from which he extracted wonderful news.

The hardships of the camp had by this time taken nearly all the enthusiasm for war out of the rank and file. The Government had promised them when they came out that they could return in nine months. They were told that they could whip the Japanese in a few months, when they would be brought back home. They would relate these things and then say that the army could not whip the Japanese, and they wanted to return home.

They possessed the strangest stories regarding their commanders. General Orloff, commanding a division in the Seventeenth Corps, was believed by some of the soldiers

to have committed suicide by poisoning on account of his failure at Yen-t'ai. While they were waiting for their tea, or after they had eaten their meal, they would gather in a warm place and sing melancholy songs. The routine of their lives was very simple, and while in camp they seemed to be occupied mostly with religious practices.

Not far from Ma-tu-ran during the winter there was what looked like a half-submerged cemetery frozen over. The soldiers had erected crosses of ice and had cut evergreens and set them out in hedges in the ice of the Hun River, with walks at intervals. The only explanation of this singular creation was that it was the product of a sentimental recreation of the soldiers and a shrine where the worshiper might say his prayers. It was as common to see a great open-air service as to see soldiers drilling or maneuvering on the positions.

When the soldiers were not at religious exercises they seemed to be foraging in the neighboring hamlets and carrying off everything they could lay their hands on without pay and without scruple. It was a misfortune and sometimes a calamity for a Chinese to be visited by them, for they laid hold of any food, drink, clothing or other necessities that might come in their way, and always carried off something to feed the camp-fire. Unless under the protection of an officer or soldiers who were living in it, a house was sure to be denuded of every movable object by the communicants of the Orthodox Church. There is no doubt that this was something of a revelation to the Confucianists and the Buddhists, though in the minds of the Chinese there are no moral or religious precepts by which a soldier is or can be bound.

The common soldier, next to his going home, looked forward with anticipation to a visit to the great Manchurian capital, Mukden. The officer himself was not immune to

the attractions of the army base, where he had many pleasures unknown to the soldier. It might be said that the principal longing of the officer was for a leave of absence at Harbin, which was a refuge from revolution at home and a refuge from the front. After a fortnight's dissipation in a more or less normal civil community with a certain society, the officer returned to the position with the keenest regret, and I think with an aching heart.

## CHAPTER XXX

### HOSTILITIES ON THE SHA-HO

THE Russians were anxious to prove several things. They desired above all to defeat the Japanese, but they had laid especial stress upon the superiority of their cavalry and upon their advantage over the Japanese in being able to campaign in the severest weather. The superiority of their organization, of their generalship, and their claims of ability to extinguish the enemy, they had virtually surrendered. Since the battle of the Sha-ho, they had not boasted of their superiority over the Japanese in the plain, as against mountain fighting, which they had long ago given up as not being one of their accomplishments.

The winter in Manchuria is in one respect an ideal time for military operations, since communications are perfect. The roads there are smooth and hard, making it possible to move troops quickly. By the end of November the army's position was prepared. All the intricate field-works were constructed before the heavy frost, and their magnitude and strength was a gauge of how well the Russian army had learned its lesson from the Japanese. The use of big guns had greatly extended the area of depredation. The Japanese used their big guns sparingly, and were thought to be laying in ammunition for a big fight. The Russians, relying upon their artillery, made constant use of it, and it was not uncommon for them to throw sixty to one hundred high explosive shells into the Japanese camp in a night.

Both sides were using electric searchlights mounted on

## *Hostilities on the Sha-ho*

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railway trucks, which they pulled up and down the track at the position.

The first day of the Chinese ceremonies in honor of the Empress Dowager was marked by a cannonade, during which the Russians discharged five hundred shells into the Japanese position with the purpose of demoralizing the work of mounting large guns, which it was suspected had arrived from their army besieging Port Arthur. The viciousness of these attacks was only aggravated by the fact that both armies had by this time so completely dug themselves into the ground that artillery fire was practically ineffective, and the ammunition was nearly wholly wasted.

The artillery contests during these days were largely a competition between the big guns, and the field artillery was only used when some infantry movement was detected. In the middle of November the severe cold silenced the artillery and infantry in the opposing positions, and drove the soldiers into their dugouts along the entire intrenched line. In a few days, when the temperature slightly moderated, the Japanese infantry opposite Pootiloff rushed a small village between the positions under cover of their artillery, but were repulsed with large casualties. At the same time they attacked at the railway and kept up the artillery firing until midnight. The attempt in the direction of Pootiloff was not understood by the Russian military. Three battalions were believed to have participated in the movement, which was thought to have been intended for a reconnaissance. It occurred on the night of November 18th, and was the most important incident since the battle of the Sha-ho.

Pootiloff was the center of interest for the whole line. From all points in the plain and in the foothills the Pootiloff guards could be seen flashing signals of attack from their fortifications as the Japanese infantry advanced. There had been repeated reports that the Japanese intended to

attack on the nineteenth, and it was supposed that this assault was to be the signal for an advance along the entire line. If this was the case it found the Russian army anticipating its intention, for it inaugurated its own hostile movements at once, both east and west of Pootiloff. The Japanese infantry arrived within fifty paces of the Russian trenches at the foot of Pootiloff, when they encountered such a powerful fire that they withdrew, leaving about one hundred dead, whom the Russians buried on the nineteenth. About two hundred wounded were also taken from the field by the Russians, who themselves lost only a few men in their trenches.

An idea of the amount of firing necessary to do even a little damage may be gained from an incident that happened during the latter part of December just west of the railway. The Japanese from their water-tank watch-tower at the Hsulin-tzü station had obtained the range of some Russian trenches. Their marksmanship was excellent, and they threw about eighty shells over the trenches where the Russians were working. But only three or four men were killed and wounded.

In the first days of December the Japanese attempted what appeared to be the placing of observation mines under the Sha-ho railway bridge, which had always been tenaciously defended and closely watched by the Russians at Lin-shen-p'u. Kuroki attacked Rennencamp with his cavalry and Rennencamp retaliated, but suspended the offensive as soon as he had recovered his lost ground.

The lapse of two months without any large scale hostilities confirmed the relaxation of both armies for the winter. The Japanese made no attempt to prevent the assembling of a large Russian Army. It was seen that so long as the armies remained on the defensive, it was about impossible for either to eject the other from its burrows, and, had it been able to

## *Hostilities on the Sha-ho*

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do so, it could not have advanced beyond its enemy's cantonments, for it would have been impossible to have bivouacked in the open, or to have dug new cantonments, while the problem of forage and fuel in a desolated region would have been difficult, if not impossible to solve.

The whole Russian army was engaged in winter enterprises, such as building sledges for the icy roads behind the position. In the hundred miles between the Liao and the mountains in the east, the soldiers, secure behind their defenses and anticipating no battles before spring, were perhaps happier than they had been at any time since arriving in Manchuria.

On the right flank, where the lines were separated from five to eight miles, there were occasional reconnoitering expeditions in which sometimes a whole battalion engaged in demonstrations and attacks, losing a few men to the enemy, and occasionally capturing a few Japanese prisoners. Some of the corps commanders while inspecting their positions were recognized by the Japanese and shelled. There were many interesting exploits between the lines carried out by a few men. On the flanks a few dismounted scouts would remain inside the enemy's lines for two or three days and return with a plausible story. One of the incidents of close relations along the Sha-ho was the blowing up of a house occupied by Japanese outposts. But the principal object of all of these demonstrations was to maintain a knowledge of the enemy's position and prevent molestation of its own cantonments.

The Czar's name day occurred on the nineteenth of November, and was preceded by five days' hostilities on the extreme east, where Kuroki advanced against Rennencamp's position. It was a region of great picturesqueness, not easily accessible and now very cold. However, the Japanese closed up against Rennencamp's lines with the evident purpose of testing their strength, and after five days withdrew. Seven-

teen mixed prisoners were captured by Rennencamp's men. Part of these were infantry, whose feet were frosted and who were found to be inadequately clothed. After apparently prospecting the possibilities of flanking the Russian left the Japanese remained quiet, but their enterprises seemed to pique the pride of the Russian cavalry. However, it can be said with justice, that notwithstanding their boast of superiority it required the impending disaster of the surrender of Port Arthur by General Stoessel to galvanize the Russian cavalry into action. Mischenko, about the first of December, sent Cossacks to reconnoiter the entire region between Mukden and Tieh-ling, where, on account of the absence of sufficient garrison, Japanese had repeatedly appeared. It was realized at this time that the army must be prepared for some stroke should Port Arthur fall. Mischenko was sent to the right flank, and the center of the lines was stripped of its cavalry for the operations that were about to take place. Where the fortifications were now the most formidable, the troops were reduced.

Following the battle of the Sha-ho there were daily announcements in the newspapers of new plans of army re-organization. The formation of the Russian army at the period of its advance the first week in October, was to be retained, but the three armies, called the Eastern, the Western, and the Commander-in-Chief's Army of the Center, now took the names of the First, Second, and Third armies, and General Gripenberg, General Kaulbars, and General Linievitch came to Manchuria to participate in the reconstruction and to assist in the command. These commanders did not reach Manchuria until the latter part of December. General Linievitch was placed in charge of the First Army, with headquarters at Kuan-shan; General Bilderling remained at the head of the army on the railway, which took the name of the Third Army; and General Kaulbars was

## *Hostilities on the Sha-ho*

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placed in command of the Second Army, which was composed of the troops on the west. His headquarters train was kept at Su-chia-t'un. General Gripenberg remained at Kouropatkin's headquarters at Chang-shang-mu-t'un.

Roughly speaking, about 8,000 mounted men were assembled under Mischenko and rendezvoused at Si-fon-t'ai, west of Ma-tu-ran, between the Hun and Liao rivers. Their primary object was to destroy a large quantity of Japanese supplies, as well as the railway station at Yin-k'ou. It was, in fact, a part only of a general plan and was to serve the purposes of a reconnaissance of the whole Japanese left, and to open the way for a general attack. It was looked upon by the cavalry as a great opportunity, and they rejoiced in the mobilization of the largest body of their branch of the army service that had yet taken place in the Eastern Empire.

After weeks of planning and numerous councils of war, and thrashing out of every possible plan to impose some obstacle to Japanese success, and to stem the tide of increasing disrepute of the Russian army in the outside world, Kouropatkin sanctioned this cautious initiatory enterprise. On Friday, the sixth of January, he issued and published in the *Manchurian Army Viestnik* an order of the day, commanding that no Russian troops should go outside of the Yin-k'ou-Kou-pang-tzü-Hsin-min-t'un railway, or to go outside a line drawn from Hsin-min-t'un north to the mouth of the Lui River. Mischenko, with his force, started south the next day, and there can be no doubt that this order was intended to give him an excuse in case he was hard pressed of returning to the position west of the Liao River, through what had been understood as neutral territory by China and foreigners in China—though it had been under the surveillance of Russian troops from the beginning of the war—and to justify, if it became necessary, its invasion by a force equivalent to an army corps. By the early morning of the

eighth of January the expedition formed into three columns abreast, and within rifle range of each other, were moving south past the Japanese left, the westernmost column following the Liao, which, during the expedition, it crossed and recrossed.

When Mischenko had departed, Russian troops were shifted to the right to await the effect of his attempt to return, which it was believed and hoped that the Japanese would attempt to frustrate. Mischenko marching straight south encountered no resistance until he reached the vicinity of Old Niu-ch'uang, about twenty miles north of his objective point. Here the central column encountered a company of Japanese garrisoning a village which the Japanese defended until they were all killed or wounded. The engagement lasted throughout the afternoon, and at dark the Japanese position was charged by the Cossacks, who, though with great loss, considering the number of men engaged, took the village. The French officer, Bertin, was killed, together with several Russian officers, while the Russian wounded amounted to fully one hundred. The defense made by the small Japanese garrison excited the admiration of the Russians, as not a single man surrendered.

Mischenko arrived before Yin-k'ou on January 13th. A squadron of cavalry from the eastern column damaged the railway near Hai-ch'eng, and when the vicinity of Yin-k'ou was reached, another squadron made an attempt to break the branch line in order to prevent re-enforcements reaching Yin-k'ou from Ta-shih-ch'iao. A squadron visited the Hsin-min-t'un railway on the west to reconnoiter.

Mischenko's army was under the impression that it was opposed at Yin-k'ou by a Japanese garrison of about 2,000 men, but as a matter of fact the garrison consisted of only one or two companies, and was re-enforced by a battalion from Ta-shih-ch'iao and by Japanese civilians from Niu-

ch'uang. With a few machine guns they were able to render a Cossack assault so dangerous as to deter Mischenko from what nevertheless would have been a well-advised action. He contented himself with an artillery attack, which he followed up with the advancing of his infantry, and when he had lost about three hundred men retired, and the great expedition had failed. At least five thousand men of his force were available for this attack, which appeared to have been frustrated literally by the Japanese butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker of Niu-ch'uang. Japanese merchants and workmen, when they heard the firing at the station two and a half miles north of Niu-ch'uang port, grasped their rifles and hurried to the scene.

En route south the expedition, believing that it had captured Japanese stores and provisions, burned something under one hundred native cartloads of bean oil belonging to native merchants of Kuan-ch'eng-tzü west of Kirin, together with the carts themselves, an unnecessary and wanton act long mourned by the innocent merchants of Kuan-ch'eng-tzü.

A force of mounted infantry, reported to be five thousand strong, waited west of the Hun River to open a place in the Japanese outposts for Mischenko to return. They were in command of a brave Caucasian general, who was especially selected for this task. When Mischenko turned back from Yin-k'ou he sent word that he was bringing his dead and wounded with him. It was reported that General Oku had sent three battalions of Japanese troops to Old Niu-ch'uang after the destruction of the small garrison there, with the intention of engaging Mischenko on his return. It was also reported that he had dispatched an entire division to prevent Mischenko's return, but Mischenko marched unmolested into his own lines. The entire force reached the Russian lines the evening of the sixteenth and dispatched three hundred

and seventy-five wounded, including thirty-five officers, to the hospital train at Su-chia-t'un.

Mischenko's expedition returned by the same route it had advanced. It encountered only Japanese outposts, from which it sustained heavier losses than it inflicted; it failed to attract any large force from the Japanese position; it failed to take the Yin-k'ou railway station, or to destroy the Japanese stores, or to make an opening by which an advantageous attack might be brought about. Its return to its own lines was ignored by the Japanese army.

January 7th, when the expedition started from General Mischenko's rendezvous, was the Russian Christmas Eve, and the date had evidently been selected with the object of throwing the Japanese off their guard. The Russian army had prepared for its holiday festivities. Guests had been invited to share the festivities of Christmas Eve with the dragoons and Cossacks on the Hun, and started to their bivouacs at El-t'ai-tzü and elsewhere early on the morning of the seventh. Port Arthur had fallen, and all within the lines were anticipating a very sober Christmas indeed. But the men of the army were not yet acquainted with the reasons for the soberness of their officers. The word was then passed at the Third and Second armies that Christmas among the cavalry was off, and invited guests received regrets from the cavalry contingents which showed that they were en route to General Mischenko's headquarters in force, under sealed orders, very unexpectedly, leaving all Christmas things behind, and all preparations in suspense.

On account of the massing of troops on the right flank from this expedition, unusual quantities of stores were being moved through Su-chia-t'un for their use. Two long trains of Chinese carts loaded with sacks of sakhali (dry bread) from Tieh-ling and Kirin were halted in the roadway beside the railway track and soon passed on to the west by the main

road to Ma-tu-ran. The railway was also unloading stores at Su-hu-chia-p'u. Nothing happened in the Russian lines to show that any important military movement was going on until the thirteenth. It was on this date that Kouropatkin received the first important news from Mischenko, describing the destruction of a Japanese outpost of about 120 men near Old Niu-ch'uang. It was the day fixed for Mischenko's attack at Yin-k'ou, and knowing that the attack was now being carried on and relying on its success, Kouropatkin called a council of war, at which Linievitch, Grippenberg, and Kaulbars were present. It was anticipated that Mischenko's destruction of a Japanese outpost garrison, and the stores at Yin-k'ou would open the way for a general engagement. But the only effect which to that time the expedition had was to be found, if at all, in a continuous artillery fire maintained by the Japanese throughout the day upon Pooti-loff. The council of war could not determine the advisability of any further action by the Russian army before Mischenko's return. It decided nothing and left the army in doubt and suspicion.

The operation was the first important raid of the war, and was certain to fix definitely in the minds of the military world, as well as in the opinion of all nations, the status of the boasted Russian cavalry. The Germans were particularly interested in the raid, as this form of warfare was one which it was supposed Russia may some time employ against Germany. It was believed by many that Mischenko would not get far, and it was prophesied that he would be only partially successful.

On the fourteenth the result of Mischenko's attack on Yin-k'ou became known, and the information was given out at headquarters that no attack along the position by the Russians was to be expected. By the fifteenth the army began to suspect another scandal, and it was difficult to get any trust-

worthy information as to the situation of Mischenko's force and what it had done. At the headquarters of the Second Cossack Brigade at Ma-tu-ran, Mischenko's return was spoken of as a great secret. All was mystery, except in regard to the officers wounded.

Those at Ma-tu-ran did not know on the eighteenth when he would return nor where, but already Mischenko's expedition had reached Si-fon-t'ai, where it looked like a great army maneuvering in the treeless plain, and had received orders to disband. The various contingents that had been assembled from every place in the line between the Eastern Army and the Hun were returning to their original camps. The dissolution of the force was the signal for every man evidently to express his opinion, and the success and importance of the raid is best expressed by the criticism of the officers who participated in it. The dragoon regiments, when they had recrossed the Hun, anathematized the Cossacks and held Mischenko responsible for another disgrace to Russian arms. From the Hun River to the mountains was scattered grumbling and complaint, and it was evident from the attitude of all the troops that had joined the expedition that never in the army had men more quickly surrendered their allegiance to a commander than these men did to Mischenko. They came out of the haze and sunshine of the west, travel-tired, and covered with dust, trying to sing songs, but feeling the humiliation of failure. At the bivouacs of a dragoon regiment there was a dinner to General Samsonoff. One who sat among them felt that they had had their hopes of retrieving the misfortunes of the war blasted. It was easily seen that the expedition was recognized by them as an ignominious failure. The regimental staff arose to impress upon their guest—the general—their loyalty to him, and when he spoke of themselves and of the troops as worthy of better things, some of them wept. To strangers

the general expressed the formal opinion that Mischenko had carried out a great expedition, but his words only seemed to emphasize the adverse conviction which he held. One conscientious officer said frankly that the expedition was of no importance, and that the Japanese recognized it and were not deceived. An intelligent and wide-awake officer opened his heart and condemned the whole enterprise, and spoke with disgust of the looting and burning of Chinese carts and merchandise. "The roads were splendid," said he, "and although it was quite warm we crossed many rivers and streams on the firm ice. The Liao was crossed five or six times. We had with us all of General Mischenko's own force and all the mounted infantry that could be got together, as well as our own dragoons. The mounted infantry had very bad horses and the dragoons took as many extra horses as could be found. Among these were a number of Japanese horses, taken from time to time by our cavalry. Of these we ourselves had four in the regimental staff. We had forty guns and we carried our own forage in case we should find the country desolated. When we reached Yink'ou we waited a long time before attacking, and before we had finished with our artillery assault the Japanese were able to bring up re-enforcements. We contended with the Japanese for awhile and then retired. Nobody seemed to know why, although it was said that we would need what ammunition we had left to fight our way back into our own lines. As the Japanese had not yet interfered with us, the superiors seemed to believe that they were preparing to bag us on our return. We only saw a few Japanese, and though they were always greatly overpowered none of them surrendered, and they died fighting bravely to the end. We encountered some Japanese cavalry and mounted infantry, but they appeared only to be keeping watch on the movements of our force, and the infantry whom we easily surrounded never surren-

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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dered to us. We did nothing but kill little outpost garrisons and loot and burn Chinese carts and merchandise. I do not know why we went. We did not make a reconnaissance of the Japanese position and we did not take Yin-k'ou, and I suppose we only made a reconnaissance of Yin-k'ou. It was all a miserable affair, and now that we have come back we have heard that the Japanese had moved three divisions to their left flank to prevent our return. But one must be a Russian to believe these stories."

The official Russian report passed over the events of the expedition with scant commentary. It announced that one-half of two companies and one-half of a squadron of cavalry were lost at Yin-k'ou. But the army forgot the incidents of its own interminable scandal in the national disgrace of the loss of an imperial fortress.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### SURRENDER OF THE CAPITAL OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE

THE news of the fall of Port Arthur was very cautiously made known to the army. Six days after the fortress had been surrendered by General Stoessel the official army newspaper admitted that its condition was grave, but gave no intimation that it had been in the hands of the Japanese for a week. General Stoessel's reports to the Czar were scattered through the pages of many issues, and it was not until after twelve days that the event was announced in words, and then only in General Stoessel's prayer to the Czar to be forgiven for what he was about to do.

The officers had accustomed themselves to the idea of Port Arthur's fall, so that the news created no great surprise. Even before the battle of Liao-yang it had been expected, and the Russians had all along since that time taken pride in the defense which the fortress had made. The authorities admitted before Christmas that no vessels had successfully run the blockade with supplies and the desperation of the defenders was tacitly understood. Many of them regarded as too optimistic the views that Port Arthur could resist for eighteen months. On the twenty-eighth of December, General Stoessel telegraphed that he had sixty men left in each company, but that only 10,000 were able to man the defenses, and of this number many were ill from scurvy and many were fighting in their bandages. He said that he had

almost no ammunition and that the Japanese were at that time masters of all the eastern and northeastern fortifications.

The news of the capitulation of Port Arthur was not known at the army base nor among the officers of the army until the sixth of January, though General Stoessel surrendered on the first. The fleet of the Eastern Empire was now practically extinct. Its military capital was gone, and it had but one fortress. The fate of the ships of the fleet may be reviewed here.

The action of April 13th, in which the *Petropavlovsk* with Admiral Makaroff and the crew were lost, was called by Togo the eighth Japanese attack upon Port Arthur. It was more than two months before the Russians were again prepared for any important action at sea, and the last event in the tragedy of the original fleet of the Eastern Empire on the high seas which took place in August ended the military history of the Port Arthur navy. What vessels survived the night of June 23d-24th and the sally of August 10th, succumbed like rats in their holes to the attacks of the Japanese land artillery toward the end of the year.

After the occupation of the Kin-chou isthmus by the Japanese Second Army of General Oku on May 26th, the Japanese Fourth Army of General Nogi was disembarked at Dalny to invest the fortress capital. The operations of General Stoessel's defense army of approximately 40,000 land and sea troops were now the main operations of the Port Arthur military, for the fleet, while not destroyed, was completely whipped and cowed. Stoessel's force of 15,000 men that defended the isthmus gradually withdrew to the out-lying defenses of the fortress itself and the garrison was besieged.

But there yet remained in Port Arthur Admiral Wittegeft, who divided the command of the sorry fleet with Admiral Oktomsky, one of the main promoters of the Eastern

## *Surrender of the Capital of the Eastern Empire*

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Empire and the only one of the great conspirators who shared the misfortunes of the Eastern Empire, for he spent his last days in a Japanese prison.

The whole fleet put to sea on June 23d and cruised about in an uncertain fashion until night, when they were unable to get back into the harbor and were attacked shortly after dark. In the moonlight Togo kept up an almost continuous battle with his torpedo flotillas, and after the moon went down at three in the morning of the twenty-fourth he sent the boats very close to the line and made a final severe attack.

At dawn the *Perseviet* was missing from the Russian fleet and several other vessels were disabled. The fleet survived this battle, but was reduced by it to such desperate straits that at the earliest opportunity when the ships could be repaired it undertook to escape from its prison. This was the final event at sea that finished the tragedy of the original fleet of the Eastern Empire.

Having dashed out to sea from the roadstead on August 10th the fleet under Admiral Witgeft and Admiral Oktomsky reached a spot between the Shan-tung mainland of China and the Korean peninsula before Togo gave battle. By this time the results of encounters between the antagonists were anticipated in advance, and a few days revealed the destruction of the fleet and the death of Admiral Witgeft. The fight lasted about forty minutes. The second in command, Admiral Oktomsky, was able to escape from the scene of battle and to return to Port Arthur with his flagship, the *Sebastopol*, which met a wretched fate from torpedoes outside Golden Hill months afterward, while the last admiral of the fleet was carried prisoner to Japan. The *Czarevitch* fled alone to Tsing-tao. A torpedo boat fled to Chi-fu; the *Askold* fled to Shanghai. The fast dispatch boat *Novik* eluded her Japanese pursuers and escaped through

the Japan Sea, but not being able to get into Vladivostok, ran ashore on Saghalen and blew herself up. The Vladivostok squadron of three ironclads, the *Gromoboi*, *Rossia*, and *Rurik*, that had started to meet the Port Arthur fleet, were intercepted by Admiral Kamamura's squadron off the east coast of Korea and dispersed, the *Rurik* being sunk, the other vessels badly damaged and the commander of the *Rossia* killed.

The story of Port Arthur from this point is simple. Its energies and resources were conserved merely for resistance. General Stoessel was called upon to resist repeated pitched assaults against his lines of forts. The first of these occurred in the latter part of August. Nogi was now at the outworks and attempted to carry them by storm. In a week he expended twenty-five thousand men in the endeavor. According to the Japanese themselves 20,000 men were lost in one night. The attempt was unsuccessful, but it brought General Stoessel to a realization of the terrible nature of the task before him, and inspired him to declare in a telegram that the fortress would be his tomb. With the garrison were several foreign military attachés and these he warned to leave on account of the state to which the place was reduced. A number of neutrals left by native junks and made their way to the Chih-li coast unmolested by the Japanese. A Russian courier, Prince Radziwill, who had arrived at Port Arthur during Nogi's attack returned to the Russian lines to tell the story of the Russian defense. Other couriers at intervals passed back and forth, and the fortress was even visited by press correspondents. By September 1st there were regiments in Stoessel's force that had lost sixty per cent. of their men. In a speech to them, the commander said that the desperation of the Japanese soldiery was so great that it was necessary for the garrison to resist to the end. It was clearly disclosed by this speech that the Japanese attack had

amazed the officers, for it was a revelation of what four months of fighting was to be.

All truce, as observed on the battlefields of the north, were ignored before Port Arthur. The Japanese asked no quarter, the Russians could neither bury their own dead nor remove the putrifying corpses of the enemy from before their breastworks. The Russian soldiers, with heaps of the slain within twenty or fifty paces of them, had to wear handkerchiefs soaked in camphor over their noses to endure the stench. Wounded men crawled about for days on the slopes and sometimes lived a week with what food and water they possessed, but could not be succored. The story in all its details is too horrible for description, for all the savageries of brute warfare were enacted in a continuous drama that makes it incomparable in military history.

Nogi brought more than three hundred guns to the siege, many of them among the most powerful of siege and fortress artillery. The eleven-inch mortars were the most powerful, and the projectiles which they discharged could not be resisted by the heaviest casemates in the Russian forts. The Japanese sappers and miners in some cases blew up the walls of the forts and stormed the breaches thus made. It required seven great battles against the main defenses of Port Arthur to defeat the garrison.

Nogi, in August, tested the spirit of the Russians and the nature of their works by the most costly assault of the siege, and then proceeded by scientific devices that would conserve his strength to reduce the great forts that were otherwise impregnable. On September 19th he was ready for another assault and gave battle for six days. After an interval of four days he began another battle on the twenty-ninth lasting two days. He fought two days beginning November 28th; resumed the battle from December 4th to December 9th, and again, from December 18th to December 20th;

and on the three days of December 28th, 29th, and 30th preceding the last day of the year, he carried out a final assault that induced General Stoessel to surrender on the first day of the New Year.

General Nogi carried on his main offensive against the three great forts of Ki-kuan, Er-lung, and Pan-lung on the east, but it was the possession of 203-Meter Hill on the northwest of the city that enabled him to make habitation in the city outside of the earthworks impossible. The capture of the Er-lung fort, on the northeast, on December 31st, was the deciding event of Nogi's operations.

The Russian Grand Army was looking for the Japanese Napoleon—for the twentieth century Genghis Khan—and they did not know whether it was to be Oyama, Kuroki or Nogi. In July they began to think of Port Arthur as lost and were disposed to count Nogi as the foremost Japanese general. Kuroki they had already found invincible, but as there could be but one Napoleon it was necessary to name the greatest.

In November all expectations regarding the survival of the fortress had subsided and hope took refuge in the faint possibility of the garrison making a last stand on Golden Hill and Tiger's Tail peninsula. When the garrison capitulated the army professed to be scandalized, for it was a sacred tradition that no Russian fortress was ever surrendered. When the terms of capitulation were known and the condition of the garrison, which still possessed food, arms, ammunition, and mustered a fighting force of about 24,000 men, Stoessel was denounced as a poltroon and the subordinate commanders, some of whom had disconcerted and opposed surrender, became heroes to loyal Russians. Stoessel, in fact, became the unhappy object of popular and official condemnation and was pursued by official accusation from his associates and was at last condemned to death and

## *Surrender of the Capital of the Eastern Empire*

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pardoned by the Czar, to whom he had journeyed after the surrender, in order to report his conduct and press the claims of the garrison for imperial clemency, in person.

The end of the proud fleet of the Eastern Empire besetted the disgrace of its beginning. When the Japanese came into possession of 203-Meter Hill their artillery was able to hound the remaining ships of the fleet about the harbor and to sink them one after another. The *Perseviet*, *Poltava*, *Pobeda*, *Pallada*, and *Retzvisan* went down, hounded by howling irresistible bombs of unprecedented power, and the *Sebastopol*, seeing their fate, took to the roadstead outside the harbor, where she preferred those sharks of naval warfare, the torpedoes, and went down after her torpedo-nets were torn in shreds and could no longer protect her. The smaller ships were hauled into the creek parallel to Pushkin Street, where their wrecks were afterward found.

The war was by no means over, for there were yet two of the ten pins in the game of demolishing the Russian Eastern Empire to fall, and Kourapatkin and the government were yet to be disabused of the idea of advance.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE LAST ADVANCE

THE army was now ready for its last advance. Mischenko's expedition had failed to provoke the Japanese offensive, and it was seen that the Japanese were waiting for the arrival of the Port Arthur garrison, by which they might have a preponderance of troops. Kourapatkin desired to fight before that event should transpire.

The fear of Nogi was a much greater incentive to fighting than chagrin at the loss of the great Pacific fortress. The Russian army, moreover, in size and equipment was now truly formidable and numbered not less than 230,000, and perhaps as many as 250,000 combatants. It had nearly one thousand available guns. The main conditions for victory, as laid down by the conservative Russian generals, namely, the collection of an overwhelming force of artillery and an enormous supply of ammunition, together with a large army, were now fulfilled. The most sanguine, however, of them doubted whether even 300,000 would be able to outflank the Japanese, which was the thing that Kourapatkin now proposed to attempt. Against his lack of one or two army corps was opposed the imminent re-enforcement of the Japanese position by the whole of the Port Arthur army, which was numbered at above 40,000 men. The conditions were such as to force him to attack. Moreover, the conviction still lingered that an attack in winter was greatly to the advantage of the Russian soldiers, and this may have added encouragement. The persuasion of General Grippenberg, who, like Stackelberg, was anxious to distinguish himself,

and to win the first victory over the Japanese, was not needed to induce Kourapatkin to act.

General Grippenberg appears to have enjoyed almost equal authority with General Kourapatkin in the battle of San-chia-p'u. He assumed the command of the Second Army (Kaulbars commanded the Third Army in the center instead of Bilderling). At the same time General Kourapatkin accompanied him and participated in the tactics of the battle. General Stackelberg was in command of the First Siberian Army Corps which had been moved from the east for this event. The newly arrived Eighth European Corps, under General Miloff, participated, as did also General Mischenko with his mixed force on the extreme right.

The advance began on the twenty-fifth of January. A great cannonade that was almost deafening began in the middle of the morning and continued until the middle of the afternoon when the infantry of both the First and Eighth Corps advanced, some of the regiments going into action as usual to the accompaniment of brass bands.

The Russian forces occupied a part of the strong Japanese redoubt position of San-chia-p'u. In the night Oyama took the offensive and attacked from his artillery position behind San-chia-p'u and from Hei-kou-t'ai on the west. Mischenko, carrying with him his artillery and some infantry, moved around the Japanese left, taking one Japanese outpost after another until he arrived within sight of the railway, which he hoped to be able to break, although he had lost heavily in his cavalry from the fire of the entrenched Japanese infantry. But when he believed himself upon the point of accomplishing this he was ordered to go back.

Stackelberg occupied four or five villages during the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh. He took the outworks of the Japanese stronghold, and the Japanese appear to have permitted him to almost gain the citadel of their main

redoubt before they began their principal assault. They then opened fire from what the Russians called a huge nest of concealed batteries behind San-chia-p'u. The battle closed on the twenty-eighth, when 24 officers and 1,600 men were lost. The total Russian losses were no less than 11,000. Stackelberg, with the First Siberian Corps, lost 7,000 men; General Miloff lost 2,000 men of the Eighth Corps; and General Mischenko, who was himself wounded, lost 1,500. Other casualties throughout the line amounted to at least 500 more. Four regiments were nearly extinguished. Oyama reported that he had taken 500 prisoners, and from the reports which they gave the Japanese underestimated the Russian losses. The Russian Thirty-sixth Rifle Regiment lost more than thirty officers, and was one of the regiments to be practically annihilated. The havoc in the Thirty-fourth Rifle Regiment was scarcely less complete.

The Japanese position at San-chia-p'u, which Gripenberg attacked, was one of great strength. The Russians passed three lines of outworks and they observed that several weeks of heavy bombardment by them had wrought no appreciable damage upon those works. The position was defended with Maxims and field-guns. According to Marshal Oyama the Japanese losses were seven thousand.

At the end of the third day and before the real magnitude of the disaster was exactly known, Kouropatkin, upon the evidence at hand, ordered the army of the right flank back into its old trenches. No disgrace that had yet occurred aroused in the army the scandal that was now provoked. Some of the bitterest animosities of the war were created on the battlefield of San-chia-p'u. General Kouropatkin endured the keen humiliation of seeing his generals involved in a quarrel and antagonism over the conduct of the battle. General Stackelberg thought that he had not been supported by

General Miloff. General Grippenberg resented Kouropatkin's interference with the movements of troops in the field, and was so much offended during the battle that he would not consent to talk with Kouropatkin when called by telephone. After the withdrawal from San-chia-p'u these dignitaries were heard accusing and blaming each other during a heated interview in Kouropatkin's car. Grippenberg at once resigned and returned to Russia, feeling himself greatly abused, and certainly much disgusted with what he found in Manchuria.

The morning of the main attack, January 26th, the weather had moderated so that it began to snow. Chang-shang-mu-t'un, Kouropatkin's headquarters, was now converted in every way into a Russian village. All the walls were whitewashed, and the interiors of the houses were converted into comfortable homes. Kouropatkin lived in his train, which was connected by insulated wires lying here, there, and everywhere, under the snow and over it, and under the railway tracks, and hanging from the glittering carriages in which the headquarters staff was quartered, making communication to all parts of the field complete. Everything about the headquarters train shone with paint and varnish. There were in fact two long trains. At the end of one of these was a beautiful chapel-car, cold, formidable, and threatening. Guards stood at intervals of every two cars and patrolled the area adjoining the tracks.

Preparations for the battle of San-chia-p'u—which was in fact merely a second attempt to carry out what Mischenko's raid had failed to inaugurate—were in progress during December. Notwithstanding that the ground was frozen to a depth of eighteen inches, new crossings where the earth was rolled out in immense cubes were being constructed at the railway embankment to facilitate the movement of troops behind the position. The operations were in a state approaching

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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the gigantic. Now that the position was attaining such a high degree of strength, with the artillery piled up in the center and men accumulated on the flanks, the issue of a great battle was seen by the military to depend upon the ability to mobilize an overwhelming force at a given point at the psychological moment before the enemy could act. Troops hitherto stationed at Kirin were brought to the position. Entirely new preparations were made in the communications for what was intended to be a general engagement, and which resulted in the disaster at San-chia-p'u. New bridges and roadways were built, and for this purpose great quantities of tools were obtained from the Chinese, made by their iron-workers after the Russian patterns. The sick and wounded in Mukden hospitals were taken to the rear—to Harbin, Chita and Irkutsk. Five hundred native carts were contracted for, to participate in the coming advance. Vigilance in the army was kept up by reports of Japanese attacks, and reports of an intention to attack the Japanese began to be circulated as if with the purpose of their reaching Japanese headquarters.

The First Siberian Corps, with General Stackelberg in command, on January 20th, after Mischenko's failure, moved from the mountains by way of the new communications across the railway to the right flank, and it was evident that Kouropatkin had accepted the alternative of a direct attack on the Japanese position in order to bring on a battle. The situation was carefully worked up according to one of the most elaborate plans of war produced by General Kouropatkin and the general staff during the war. It showed on the face of it that Kouropatkin had been most seriously thinking of the offensive.

From the moment of General Mischenko's departure for Yin-k'ou, all communications to the outside world by telegraph that might have any bearing on the army's intention

## *The Last Advance*

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were stopped. Correspondents were thus warned of important operations, and set out for the front.

The heavy vapor slowly began to turn to snow at seven in the morning as I was leaving Mukden by the south road. Headquarters at Chang-shang-mu-t'un were deserted, General Kouropatkin having departed with his staff in the night. A big rolling cannonade began west of the railway at 9:45, announcing that the attack was on. At Pai-t'a-p'u the troops in reserve were out in the open listening to the battle, and gazing into the southwest. I passed Pai-t'a-p'u shortly after noon in a veritable snowstorm. A division general stationed there in the reserve came out of his quarters to listen to the battle and was gazing in the direction of Su-chia-t'un, where he could see nothing, for by this time the snow was blinding. At Su-chia-t'un the staff of Kaulbars was standing about his train. When I reached the zone beyond the railway the snow had ceased, and it began to turn colder. The infantry had begun its advance and re-enforcements were moving from the railroad westward. A battalion came up and halted in the ice and freezing snow to rest. The wind began to blow and soon set them on the move. They went away in the cold and gloom of the evening, singing their marching song, and disappeared in the west. In the night the Russians took the two villages of Ho-lan-t'ai and Fu-chia-chuang-tzu. Hand to hand fighting ensued in the streets of the villages and hamlets, and many Japanese and Russians fell and were left lying in the streets. Fighting was suspended at nightfall, and I spent a cold night in a native house behind the position. The twenty-seventh was colder, with a bitter wind blowing steadily from the north, greatly to the disadvantage of the Japanese, who were facing it and who only with great difficulty were able to use their rifles, or see clearly. The Russians were now for the first time able to examine the approaches to, and the outworks of,

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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the Japanese position. They found in the firing zone that had been between the lines the frozen bodies of numbers of their scouts, who had disappeared during their life on the Sha-ho. Having frozen gradually, their faces and hands were eaten by the Chinese dogs. These bodies were found in all attitudes, as if when wounded and unable to walk they had been fighting off the dogs or endeavoring to walk or crawl. With ponderous wadded or fur clothes, with only a skull for a head, and with no hands, these bodies were perhaps the most revolting objects belonging to the horrors of war. Some of them were photographed when the army retired. It was impossible to bury them, or indeed to carry the newly wounded, upon whom the dogs of the battlefield had doubtless made horrible levies.

The day's battle in the First Corps resulted in the estimated loss of about two thousand. The Japanese continued their offensive on the twenty-seventh, administering the most terrible punishment that the Russian army had yet sustained from any attack. The attempt to take advantage of the supposed impotency of the Japanese troops during the severest rigors of winter was punished in the thirty-six hours by a loss of five thousand Russian soldiers. The Tenth Corps was drawn into the attack, and the artillery of the center made a demonstration in the hope of checking the Japanese offensive. There was nothing to show that the Japanese had shifted any large bodies of troops, although they had re-enforced their redoubt position at San-chia-p'u during the night of the twenty-sixth. This fact, together with the magnitude of the defeat already sustained, made impossible in the mind of the commander-in-chief the offensive battle which he had planned against the whole of the Japanese position.

When the plans for this great advance had first been made known, it was thought feasible by independent critics.

## *The Last Advance*

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The chances of the Russian army marching back into Liao-yang were regarded as favorable. That there was a change of opinion of independent critics within the lines since the battle of the Sha-ho, showed the effect which under the most unfavorable circumstances mere time will have over relatively the same conditions. It is a fact, however, that notwithstanding most of their military idols had been broken the Russians still clung to the idea of their being pre-eminently a winter people. As for their ability to fight with superior effect in the plain, they claimed at the time of this battle no more than an equal chance with the Japanese. It was with an irony beyond the achievement of human control therefore that the weather as by Divine command arrayed itself upon their side to emphasize their defeat. Relapsing again into the defensive, and with the memory of perhaps the most disgraceful failure of the whole war, the Russian army began to question even its superiority in defense of intrenchments.

San-chia-p'u was as cold and wintry a battlefield as Eylau or Austerlitz, or as is suggested by the famous lines on Hohen-linden. Some of the machinery assembled for the advance gave the field after the defeat a depressing appearance beyond all power of words to describe. At Su-chia-t'un, where General Kaulbars, who took no important part in the battle, remained in readiness for the general attack, that never came, could be seen on a siding opposite the station, great piles of tools with which it had been intended to build roads and bridges and to extend the railway as the Japanese fell back. Tools had ever been in their profusion and excellence the eloquent impeachment of those who behind them were wanting as men.

When the estimates were all made it was announced that the Russian losses for the battle were nearly twelve thousand, and this was without counting many who died in the hospitals

of gangrene caused by frost, or of amputation resulting from frost. Each company that took part in the main events of the battle received fifteen St. George's Crosses for distribution by lot among the survivors. Fifty St. George's Crosses were given to the soldiers of one battery.

Besides the First Siberian Corps and the Eighth Russian Corps, the Second and Fifth brigades of Sharpshooters, and the Sixty-first Reserve Division, were engaged in the battle, which extended also to the Tenth and Fifth corps. On receipt of the news of the withdrawal from San-chia-p'u and the abandonment of the general attack, the officers of the center called for champagne and other drinks to celebrate the occasion. The soldiers gathered together and sang songs. Under the new organization the army had had its most humiliating disaster. The participation of the Czar in the affairs of the battlefield had proven a failure. General Kouropatkin telegraphed the Czar that he was hampered in his offensive operations by the failure of the European troops to advance. This was an impeachment of the Eighth Army Corps, commanded by General Miloff and of General Grippenberg. The order of the day revoking Kouropatkin's original order for a general advance gave two reasons for abandoning the offensive. First, on account of the losses; and second, because the attack had failed in celerity, making the advance impracticable.

It had been the device of the Russian army from the very beginning of the war to decimate if possible the ranks of the Japanese by artillery fire on a mapped zone, every detail of which was known to their artillerists. It was at the battle of San-chia-p'u that the Japanese succeeded better in this device than had the Russians at any place than perhaps at Port Arthur. At Liao-yang and all the defenses in the surrounding mountains this plan had never succeeded in turning the scale of success in favor of the Russians, while at San-

### *The Last Advance*

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chia-p'u the destruction in their own ranks was so great that they believed their plan for a general movement defeated by it.

The hope of an advance was permanently broken. The shock of failure was so great that Kouropatkin renewed his desperate intrenching activities, especially on the Hun opposite the battle-ground. His apprehension was disclosed in a telegram to the Czar in which he said that his forces were in a dangerous position. He was then anticipating and preparing for an attack which followed in less than a month and which decided the question of a further land campaign.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### BATTLE OF MUKDEN

THE center of the Russian line at the fortified hill at Er-ta-kou, where the mountains and hills met the plain, was entrusted to the Fourth Siberian Corps, of the First Army, under General Zarubaieff, to defend. Zarubaieff's headquarters were at Kuan-shan, a village behind a hill of that name, which overlooked the great fortified hills Er-ta-kou, Pootiloff, and Novogorod. At this village General Linievitch, commanding the First Army, had his headquarters until the twenty-fifth of March.

"Within six hours," said the Russians there, "we would ourselves have attacked." But in this great battle, fought around Mukden, which was to be a severer test of the Russian land forces than any previous engagement, the Japanese, always informed and eternally ready, took up their own grappling tactics and closed against the Russian left on February 23d, fencing for grasp of their large and unwieldy enemy. At last, after months of preparation and waiting by both sides, and apprehension, the Japanese struck with the swiftness and vagary of lightning. They crept to their attack here and there, first with a blow in the foothills east of Er-ta-kou, then along the railway, then in the eastern mountains, and lastly on our extreme right.

There were some Russian officers who, realizing the intentions of the Japanese, solemnly looked each other in the eyes upon this anticipation of Russian plans as though it was another impertinence of the enemy and as though Russian Imperial designs were still notoriously infallible.

## *Battle of Mukden*

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In four days the Japanese advanced twenty miles on the east, pushing the left flank back over the nest of mountains which constituted the Russian eastern barrier and took the pass "Ta-ling," which opened to them the direct road to Fu-shun and Tieh-ling!

By this time there was an unbroken cannonade reaching from Ta-ling to Chan-tan, a battle-line as it followed the position one hundred and ten miles in length. At morning a company of infantry were drilling at Kuan-shan on a small parade-ground before headquarters in the immemorial evolutions that were a part of an obsolete military system, and the same officers mentioned above remarked, while the battle advanced: "There is but one thing to do, and that is to stop the war and reorganize the army. It cannot be done in time to affect this war, and we can never even hope to defeat the Japanese with our present organization and tactics."

The veteran Linievitch, commanding the First Army, seeing the effect on his left flank of the Japanese advance, moved from the foothills at Kuan-shan and Er-ta-kou to the extreme east, and established his headquarters at Shi-hu-ch'ang on the Ta-ling-Fu-shun road, where he steadied his wavering line, but stripped of troops the left center from which he came.

On February 26th it was seen that there was every prospect of a great battle. On the twenty-eighth it was learned that General Alexeieff temporarily commanding Rennencamp's forces on the east had been calling for re-enforcements for four days. General Rennencamp had been sent to the west and put in command of General Mischenko's division, Mischenko being still at Mukden, convalescent of a wound received in the Battle of San-chia-p'u. This was done in execution of the Russian interrupted plan of battle whereby General Alexeieff was to participate in holding the

Japanese right while Rennencamp participated in turning their left. But now Rennencamp was hurrying across the front to his own command.

At this moment it was fully apparent that a state of affairs existed such as might demoralize any nation. A great army that had intended to be itself the aggressor paused to discover the enemy's intention. A hostile demonstration throughout the greatest field-works ever constructed, by the strongest armies ever pitched in battle, after three and one-half months of preparation, electrified Mukden and re-created and multiplied all previous anxieties. And in four days, although the battle must last yet ten, the army already under the most sinister conviction was afraid to look into the future. For now, the twenty-eighth, the Japanese opened fire in the center with their unmatched Port Arthur siege guns!

From the moment this occurred there was no question of the enemy's intentions. Another and perhaps final battle was thus inaugurated and set in full swing. And being the innovation of the enemy it had all the effect of being an earnest not alone of his ability but of his plan and resolution to carry it through.

I do not believe it is an exaggeration to say that the hearts of serious commanders there sunk to the lowest ebb. The story will perhaps never be written, except in fragments, for the battle was a tragedy for them, and the survivors have been engrossed with too many subsequent tragedies perhaps to care to recite the sorrows of an evil day, in a disgraceful adventure, on an alien soil with a despised and strange antagonist. I never in all the two weeks of terrible battle heard one hopeful word, or knew of one from any supposedly sane and intelligent Russian officer except those inventions of Russian successes on the east whereby the troops were represented as having reached Liao-yang, and Kouropatkin's proclamations on two occasions to the effect

Frederick  
McCormick  
'04



General Rennencamp (autograph)



## *Battle of Mukden*

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that the progress of the battle was satisfactory, put out by the general staff.

If the Japanese expected some effective moral damage from opening fire with their Port Arthur siege guns they were not disappointed. To the Russians facing them, nothing like this had ever occurred. The Japanese, who had already bombarded the famous Pootiloff sopka for three days, commenced with eleven-inch shells under which nothing lives, and, in twelve hours the works there which it had taken four months to perfect, were demolished. The Russian officers recited this with bated breath and manifest anxiety. At the same time four of these awful projectiles fell upon Er-ta-kou, three miles farther east, and the Russian line prepared for a general Japanese night assault which was almost certain to take place.

The most significant and ominous event that had ever transpired on the Sha-ho occurred this day when these monstrous engines of dissolution fell there, for they announced that the invincible army of the Mikado was prepared to wrest the great fortifications of the Sha-ho and the "Second Capital" of China from the grand army of the Czar. The strong defenses of the center, which had been the proud citadel of Russian rifles, became the ground of contest with the bayonet.

The impression which this event produced upon the center was one of gloom, and a situation arose such as is only produced by the ironies of war, and possible perhaps only in a present-day Russian camp. The base of one of these eleven-inch shells that had fallen on Er-ta-kou was brought into the mess room and an officer examining it, remarked with dread anticipation: "One of these shells may fall here at any moment." Another said: "It is impossible to hold the line here now, our position is untenable."

Two officers attached to the staff with whom I conversed

questioned me about the latest rumors of peace, for there had been dispatches concerning the same; and word by word carried my statements to an adjacent table where a group of the highest corps officers were drinking champagne. These thoughts occupied them during the interval between the evening meal and the arrival of the headquarters' band and, such is the buoyancy, fatalism, or sentimentalism of the Russian character that they called for the saddest and most seductive music. There was one favorite, a waltz, very popular among them, called, I think, "The Wood-nymph," and with the sweet measures of this waltz were mingled reports of the momentary tragedies of the outposts, the low roll of the night guns and the clatter of the rifles as the Japanese made their night assault against Pootiloff. As I left the mess room and passed out through the vestibule I noticed that the musicians received with gratification the approval and encore of the officers and moved loyally and spiritedly on to the next waltz. At that moment and while champagne was brought in and poured out, there were bayonet charges going on in front, and the messengers from the battle-line brought in some of the enemy's projectiles, some of his infantry caps oozing with blood and brains, and other accouterments and paraphernalia that constitute the documents of the military intelligence department in battle. The officers of the corps staff tendered a cap of a soldier of the Japanese Imperial Guard containing brains and blood to Captain William Judson of the American Army, who declined the grawsome souvenir.

About midnight General Zarubaieff returned from a consultation with the commander-in-chief, and related that in Mukden the very Chinese street-arabs shouted out after him to inquire if he was not going to Tieh-ling!

"Tieh-ling, capitan? Tieh-ling bolshoi, capitan?" said they. During the day shrapnel and brisants were striking

Keng-ta-jen-shan, as well as along the entire twenty-one verst position eastward to Kao-t'ou-ling, a pass, where was afterward a terrible infantry duel. When night came there was nowhere more tragedy than in the center. It was impossible, almost, to sleep. To the west the roll of guns. In the east the cannon flashes could be seen striding without a sound like a long line of gaunt specters back and forth in the dark midnight sky. In front, yet still the rifle clatter, chug, and occasionally ominous quiet! and over all, the soft witching music of the Geisha from the tireless band in the mess room stole into our house where, with a colleague, I stood behind a mat-battened window to listen. At the same time there was the sound of revelry. The surroundings had all the outward suggestion of a night in decaying Rome where all the future was involved in one last throw of the dice.

Though they continued drinking, it would have been difficult to have told precisely what they were drinking to. It was a part of that bravado which was thought by them to belong to *esprit de corps*, and which inspires one officer to remark to a brother officer, "I am surprised and chagrined to find that you are not wounded!" or, "What! you have not been wounded?" They seemed to desire to appear light-hearted and frivolous in the presence of all that was serious and awful, though to be drunk would continue a "scandal" so long as man retained the sense of animal superiority and the upright posture.

Two guinea-pigs belonging to an officer of the First Army staff scampered and played about in the officer's room, where we bivouacked, and the native tenant lay in an opium stupor on a k'ang—the pale cannon's flash casting a perceptible ghost-light upon him.

But let us go on with the thunder for there's plenty of it. The Russian outposts in the vicinity of Pootiloff fell back

two miles! Pootiloff was untenable! The once proud stronghold which cost three thousand Russian men killed and wounded to recover after the battle of the Sha River, and which remained valiantly defended for four months, now broken and inglorious, fell to the mean contention of the outposts—the Russian infantry awaiting the signal of the enemy's approach to return to their ruined trenches there and repulse the assault.

Half-way to Keng-ta-jen-shan, where the Japanese on the night of the twenty-fifth had to leave behind them an hundred and ten dead and wounded, to remain on the field for two days under fire from both sides, they now charged the Russian outposts ten times with hand-grenades. In the evening they succeeded in advancing two miles nearer to Lin-ch'ien-hu-t'un, rendering the Keng-ta-jen-shan road impassable and covering it with both shell and rifle fire.

General Zarubaieff gave orders to allow the Japanese to remove their dead and wounded if they so elected. But they showed no inclination to do so. All night, guided by torch signals, they charged the outposts, approaching within fifty paces before firing, and even arriving inside the Russian lines with grenades in hand. The maimed and wounded crawled about in the firing zone, where they could be seen lifting themselves up sometimes only to fall back helplessly and to sadly awaken the sympathy of the Russian soldiers and officers contemplating them from the shelter of their own commanding trenches.

The Russian operations in the center had so far been confined to the artillery with which the Russians made an unprecedented demonstration to relieve the pressure on their flanks. The relatively small manifestation of the Japanese there aroused the suspicion that the main Japanese attack was intended for the center. Under the shelling from siege-guns, the shriek of hand-grenades and the explosion of ground





## *Battle of Mukden*

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mines the Russians prepared for those desperate Port Arthur assaults which the siege mortars of the enemy suggested—methods of terror going on for the purpose of screening the real strategy of the battle.

The whole Japanese line had now pushed itself up against the Russian main position from Chan-tan in the west, to Ma-chun-tan and farther east, where it had moved up twenty to fifty miles from its winter quarters. At Er-ta-kou, where the Japanese had struck four eleven-inch shells and maintained an intermittent fire of brisants against the Russian batteries hidden in the gullies coursing down on the north-west slope, our officers complained of having only a scant two regiments with which to repulse the Japanese main assault which they anticipated.

Having mined the Sha River from their impregnable redoubt at Lin-shen-p'u, less than a verst west of the railway, the engineers of the Thirty-fifth Division blew up a Japanese redoubt in the same village, and infantry simultaneously rushed the railway bridge over the Sha, which had been under contention since October 15th, but without success. They held it for only a short interval and were forced to retire to their original position.

The news of the flanks had by this time traversed the whole position, and the Russian army knew that it was on the defensive throughout its entire length. For four days the Russians received and met the attack, falling back in the east, holding grimly to the west, and making a gigantic counter-demonstration in the center. The battle was on in earnest.

Rennencamp, while temporarily commanding Mischenko's Western Detachment guarding the extreme right flank, had scouted along the Japanese left and discovered that it was impossible to advance there. He was hurrying back to the Eastern Detachment, to his own command, to find with

chagrin that its headquarters were now at Ma-chun-tan, twenty miles behind the spot where he had left it! No sooner had he reached his own camp than he learned that the right flank which he had just left had been partially paralyzed and was being rolled up like his own!

On March 1st Oku fought the Russian intrenched troops at Chan-tan on the Hun, defeated them, and occupied the place. From the works there the Russian artillerymen claim to have seen an entire regiment of Oku's infantry destroyed in its advance by their shrapnel. They named their own losses at one thousand. The Russians were then forced back past Chan-ch'uan-tzu, and on March 2d the right flank lost again in a pitched engagement at Tao-t'ai-tzu on the south bank of the Hun where it retired again under compulsion from its defenses before Oku, who was by this time driving against the Russian right with such force as could only be compared with his attacks in the South road at Liao-yang.

The Russian troops there, now twice beaten, were calling for re-enforcements, and the army began to suspect the awful presence of General Nogi.

The name of Nogi was to the Russians something of what that of Achilles must have been to the defenders of Troy. Ever since the fall of Port Arthur they had tried to trace and to locate him. Each of the three Russian armies had stood in equal dread of him, of his eleven-inch guns, and of his invincible, bandy-legged, 203-Meter Hill conquerors. Kouropatkin ordered the right flank to fall consistently back.

The situation at this moment was truly dramatic. Beginning in the far east, Madridoff's detachment of Rennen-camp's command was cut off and lost, to know no more of the army's fortunes until some days after the horses of Madridoff's messengers dropped dead of fatigue on our trail at K'ai-yuan; the detachment on the Liao River east of Hsin-min-t'un was engaged in a running escape across the head of

## *Battle of Mukden*

---

the Japanese cavalry in front of Nogi's army, and was making toward Mukden from the northwest! An engineer on the Mukden-Hsin-min-t'un road, west of Ta-shih-ch'iao, while mapping, looked up to see a column of Japanese infantry moving past him to the north, not eight hundred meters distant!—the Liao was entirely relinquished. The First Siberian Corps, which was so terribly needed on the west where there was a continuous demand for re-enforcements to arrest the progress of the Japanese, was sent to the foothills east of Chang-shang-mu-t'un, Kouropatkin's winter headquarters. Kouropatkin, though under no misapprehension of the seriousness and drift of the conflict, had yet not apprehended the advance of Nogi around his right flank and had only returned from Fu-shun where he had been waiting another left flank movement such as the Japanese had consistently made heretofore.

And now also there began for this battle the decline and fall of the Russian generals that was a phase of every battle of the war. General Alexeieff, who had disappeared from prominence shortly after the battle of Ta-shih-ch'iao and then reappeared, was making his way laboriously and sadly with his baggage along by the commander-in-chief's now deserted headquarters to the rear, to be heard of no more, a good, valiant old general, discredited because he had fallen back with the Eastern Detachment before the advance of Kawamura.

The officers of the center, over their champagne, sifted a little more closely, fragment by fragment, the rumors of peace until they gave up hope, though the turning of the right flank by the enemy diverted their fears of an unusual attack in the center, which was, with its artillery, pursuing a demonstration that was approaching desperation.

The battle of the right flank now numbered two signal Russian defeats, Chan-tan and Tao-t'ai-tzu; the Japanese

were pushing past Ma-tu-ran to Chan-tien-p'u, and Nogi was approaching the line of Russian redoubts west of Mukden. The news spread like wildfire. The Chinese learned of it and knew that the decisive hour was come. The foreign and Russian merchants following the army, who had anticipated some great event and made themselves believe in a Russian victory, hitherto confident that the Russian army would never allow itself to be dislodged from its Manchurian stronghold, were now seized with such panic-like fear that they ventured out to the battlefield. On the west, just beyond the railway, they saw the Red Cross tumbrils rolling in with their ugly freight and got a glimpse of the first prisoners arriving from Nogi's lines. Among these panic-stricken army followers was a young merchant who owned ten thousand cases of champagne, the whole of the Chinese coast stock, which he had monopolized for the Mukden market. The prospect of Mukden without Russians was to him a nightmare.

Inside the railways, in the settlement boundaries, the Greek and Armenian and other sutlers who had retreated all the way from Ta-shih-ch'iao in the south, and Hai-ch'eng, damned the Russians openly as they pondered once more, flinging away large stocks of valuable merchandise and fleeing northward. The shops had already begun to close, and several were already decamped. What remained of the sutler's settlement was within appreciable distance of bedlam when day closed. The events on the west that were now inaugurated were to outlast all watching, outlast all enthusiasm, and novelty and energy.

The appearance of the battlefield at night was hardly less wonderful than the spectacle by day. Late on March 1<sup>st</sup> I recrossed the Hun, south of Mukden, and turned into the great military road leading to Kuan-shan. Darkness overtook me before I was half-way to Er-ta-kou. Men carrying

## *Battle of Mukden*

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three litters of wounded told me that forty cart-loads of the same had passed back earlier in the day on this road, and that on other roads it was the same. At nightfall the line of Russian batteries extending in a semicircle for three or four miles at the back of Novgorod and Pootiloff sopkas, receiving a volley from the enemy, replied in unison—one long picket-line of flame lighting up the deep purple of the darkening plain. Horsemen approached from all directions and disappeared in the darkness. Flashes of cannon-light dimly illumined the eastern sky accompanied by faint sounds, and when it was quite dark and moonless a signal was burnt on Pootiloff sopka, glowing in the vaporous night as it flared up and then died away.

At eight o'clock a terrific cannonade began, such as was only possible with our unprecedented numbers of cannon, and continued intermittently throughout the whole night. The Japanese were charging Pootiloff. At three o'clock in the morning of the second they made a second attempt, the rifles alternating with the guns and the shells like fireworks lighting up a wide expanse of night.

At dawn of the second there was no respite. The cannonade went on undiminished. From the top of the Kuan-shan Red Cross cars could be seen creeping over the thin field-railways to the position, and infantry re-enforcements from the east filed along the military roads to the west and south. A snowstorm, which now set in and obscured the enemy's position and the bursting shells, by the nervous apprehension which it caused, accelerated the artillery fire. The possibility or continuance of a blinding storm, because it gives occasion for surprise, excites apprehension by day and dread by night.

In the afternoon the sky suddenly cleared. In the wide miles of plain in the zone of two or three hundred siege-guns on our side and one to two hundred on the side of the

Japanese between Pootiloff and Lin-shen-p'u, there was a mass of smoke resembling all the October haze and burnt powder that characterized the battle of the Sha River four months before, with geysers of vapor, smoke, and débris hurled high up. Two great fugases went up that were like volcanic eruptions.

An almost continuous artillery engagement, with rifle-fire interspersed, had now for two days marked the desperate demonstration of the Russian armies in the center to arrest or mitigate the disaster on the right where Oku was wedging in between the Second and Third Armies toward the Hun railway bridge, and Nogi was racing for the rear of Mukden. Goethe, who described the cannonade at Valmy, would have considered this an earthquake in comparison, and his words at that forgotten event might, with as much truth, have been pronounced over the consequences that followed these events, that "from this day forth commences a new era in the world's history"—for the complete defeat and rout of all the land forces of the Eastern Empire had commenced. The demonstration in the center failed to make any apparent impression on the drift of the battle, and by the morning of the third the events of the center and of the entire line were eclipsed by the battle of the right flank.

On the second the Russians claimed to have regained something of their position on the east. Very early the remains of the First Army headquarters were removed from Kuan-shan, the army stores were hurriedly evacuated, and all troops, transports, Red Cross camps, and artillery parks moved out, for the place was no longer safe and had been reduced to a state of desuetude by the Japanese, who had by this time fixed the whole character of the final land battle. The doom of the Sha River line was foretold by the breaking up of buildings which now commenced. The center, in a day, became attenuated and melancholy, and the disheart-

## *Battle of Mukden*

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ened troops there were regaled by the general staff with tales of the advance of the left flank to Liao-yang. It was represented to them and to the whole center and right flank that the Russian front was swinging around rigidly to a position parallel with the railway. Instead the Russian army now described in its form a complete right angle with the apex at Lin-shen-p'u.

At the house where I had slept a soldier of the First Army appeared at dawn with a cart and rescued the guinea-pigs, with which he made off through the foothills to Shi-hu-ch'ang. There were two or three Armenian and Caucasian merchants who, bereft of patronage, stalked up and down among their boxes and tins, and over the little counters in their deserted shops anathematized the army and forgot to prepare to withdraw.

It was now that the extensive preparations for this event covering months appeared so formidable and so inconsequent. In leaving the houses the soldiers smashed the windows and doors. As I passed through the streets I could hear the ring of falling glass and the smash of scantling. Elaborate and commodious winter quarters which officers had fixed up were deserted to dogs and vermin. The extensive telegraphs with which Kuan-shan was equipped to communicate with two thousand square miles of the battle area, and hitherto so important, hung useless in their fittings, and wires began to be straggled about the roads. Broken telegraphs are as pitiful in their aspect as disheveled and slatternly women, and are as eloquent of the desertion of man. The telegraph manager, left without orders and suspecting the worst, unable to leave his post, assumed a reckless but confident air.

Such was the center on the afternoon of the second, its importance overcome by events both on the east and the west. It was unable with all the bluster of its siege artillery to make the Japanese believe that the day of fortune was not

along the west where for two days the carnage had been greatest.

Wounded men on the evening of the second came out of all roads and paths in twos and threes behind the south front as I passed from the center to the position west of Mukden. Immense trains of baggage were also en route to the rear, up the Pai-t'a-p'u road. Throughout the zone of military roads and towns reaching ten miles to Mukden the Red Cross depots, forage, fuel, engineers, sappers, and quartermasters' camps and ammunition parks were being dismantled. Chang-shan-mu-t'un, at the middle of the Fu-shun railway where Kouropatkin had his headquarters all winter, was deserted, and passing near, in the road, alone in his carriage loaded with baggage, I saw with regret gallant old General Alexeieff making his way to the rear. A little farther back along the south bank of the Hun, when I made my last visit to the center, on the third, the last worried stragglers of the First Siberian Corps, were hurriedly making their way with wild looks toward the beleaguered right flank. In the level, bare plain between the Fu-shun railroad and the Hun, where they made their way through sun and little flurries of dust, long native cart-trains of hay, bread, and sakhalii (dried bread bits), just arrived on the wild and lonely scene, were being turned back to Tieling, Kirin and Kuan-ch'eng-tzü, whence they had come.

Contemporary with the retreat to the rear and to obscurity, of the good old General Alexeieff, was the return of the First Siberian Corps from the east, now making its way to the Mukden-Hsin-min-t'un road. No corps, perhaps, that ever existed, had a more checkered and tragic history. Twice the shuttlecock of court adventure commanders not more than one-third of its original personnel remained at the beginning of the battle, when it was in reserve west of the Hun River north of Chan-tan. At the commencement of the

## *Battle of Mukden*

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battle it was started eastward and followed the military railroad and Su-chia-t'un and Pai-t'a-p'u military road, doing no fighting, but exhausting itself in vain marches at the orders of the commander-in-chief, who expected the main Japanese advance to come from the east. Marching four days diametrically away from the flanking movement of the enemy, it careered over an elliptical arc of an hundred and twenty versts behind the battle-line the whole length of the main position like a comet, to meet with nearly total destruction at Ta-shih-ch'iao and Yu-hung-t'un, northwest of Mukden.

The effect upon the mind of all this spectacle of the center was depressing, for it showed how, with ironical and deadly recurrence another impressive and showy fortress position of the Russians was falling before the irresistible onslaught of the Japanese. The siege works and all the interminable military paraphernalia of a thousand square miles of this sanguinary theater were going, as it were, like jack-straws. I remembered now with what anticipation this present grand and awful moment had been awaited by the army, a part of which, at any rate, I had known somewhat intimately; among some with abnegation and soldierly anxiety and courage, among others with reckless determination and thirst for adventure, medals, and promotion, and among the thoughtful with awe and dread—the elders generally pessimistic and apprehensive, the youth usually boastful and braggart with blind, unbounded, admirable, but puppy faith in their commander-in-chief.

The right was now hinging on Lin-shen-p'u, and the Japanese had turned the line so far around as to command the Hsin-min-t'un road, where they nearly cut off the retreat of a brigade of railway guards that had to rejoin the line of defense by a detour to the north, coming in by way of the Imperial Northern Tombs, where they fell in with re-enforcements. The front was now about twenty versts from Muk-

den on the southwest, where the Russian losses along the left bank of the Hun had alone been ten thousand. On the third the Japanese took Su-hu-chia-p'u on the Hun, and pushed up to Mo-chia-p'u, where they arrived on the fourth, and where the Russians destroyed two bridges and prepared to fall further back. At the same time the region of the Village of Yen-shi-t'un, six versts farther north, and, later, Yu-hun-t'un, became the scenes of conflicts continuing with great, and often diabolical energy for five days.

General Bilderling, commanding the Third Army, moved his headquarters from near Su-chia-t'un (Kao-lao-tzu) to a village near the bridge-head, east of the railway,

In four days the Japanese marched forty versts, fighting four desperate and successful battles, turning the Russian right from the parallel to the meridian. This adroit and masterful achievement would not perhaps have so much amazed the Russian armies had it not shielded the advance of General Nogi's Port Arthur Army, whose presence became now positively known by the capture of prisoners in the vicinity of Yu-hun-t'un. This event disclosed the imminent fate of the Sha River line and electrified the armies with the alarm, "Nogi is flanking!"

Japanese shells were breaking in sight of the city walls of Mukden, along the west. Native refugees began to arrive from all roads leading in from the southwest and west, scared, and some of them wounded. Japanese prisoners, exhausted by two days of sleepless toil and hunger, were sleeping under guard inside the line of redoubts that extended from the Imperial Northern Tombs south along the swamp-land to the Hun, inside Mo-chia-p'u, like dead men, unable to walk or to remain awake.

There had now ascended enough incense and supplication on high from the Russian nation and the army to almost smoke the Christian God out of his heaven. And the only

## *Battle of Mukden*

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answer that came was, that Nogi was flanking! Each day at dawn the artillery along the west broke out in a deafening unbroken cannonade loud enough it seemed to awaken the dead, subsiding during the morning and renewing itself again in the afternoon.

On the third, when his First Siberian Corps began at last to arrive at the railway settlement where he had his headquarter's train, Kouropatkin announced that he was satisfied with the progress of the battle. On the fourth, when the First Siberian Corps prepared to move up the Hsin-min-t'un road, Kouropatkin reassured the army and rode in person along the western position; appealing to the infantrymen to stick tenaciously and unfailingly to the dirt where they stood, for it was upon them that he relied; to the cavalry to do *their* duty, for it was upon *them* that he relied; to the artillery, for it was upon *them* that he relied. The populace standing on buildings and railway trucks at the Mukden station, saw him ride along as they watched the Japanese shrapnel breaking over the frozen swamp and kao-liang land far inside the redoubts, and the Japanese in turn could see them and could hear the whistle of the locomotives and watch the railway traffic from their position between Yu-hun-t'un and Ta-shih-ch'iao.

Mukden, the ancient capital, was awed but undisturbed, and her people contemplated almost with indifference the bursting shell along the hitherto quiet and unmolested west. Riding rapidly out to the west, we crossed the track of the commander-in-chief, where a soldier, still flushed with pride from the praises and exhortations which General Kouropatkin had just given the line there, told us what he had heard. He spoke with pride of the infantry, of which he was one, referred slightly to the cavalry, and said that it was upon themselves that the defense of the line depended. "The commander-in-chief," he said, "had said so." It was even-

ing, and a cold wind was blowing where he stood by his little camp-fire. A long, thin line of troops was advancing against the sun, on our left. It was the infantry, who remain the reliance and bulwark of armies through all the metamorphosis of firearms and the advance of science—the man with the rifle and bayonet and camp-fire, who clings to the dirt where he crouches.

For eight versts along the line of redoubts, immediately north of the Hun, there had for two days been a continuous and acrid artillery conflict, darkened and made terrible by infantry charges and assaults, especially at Yen-shi-t'un, while the Japanese broke shrapnel at Ta-p'u, within two versts of the great railway bridge over the Hun, which more and more appeared to be Oku's objective. At the same time Nogi's uninterrupted advance northward could be traced by the cannon sounds and shell-bursts visible at the Hsin-min-t'un road. At evening I reached the Hun River railway bridge where, from the abutments could be seen, by the perpetual explosions marking distinctly the line of contact along the southwest and south, that the Russians had fallen back before Oku from their hitherto impregnable redoubt of Lin-shen-p'u. The line now hinged on Sha-ho-p'u, a small village east of the railway, in line with the old railway embankment leading northwest to Mo-chia-p'u. A long train of hospital trucks rolled slowly by over the great bridge en route northward. Within a quarter of an hour eighteen hundred wounded passed over the bridge to Mukden. In addition, trains of hospital-carts loaded with wounded wound along the lanes from the southwest and west, all making their way to Mukden hospitals and hospital trains.

From Chan-t'an to Tao-t'ai-tzu, Mo-chia-p'u, Yen-shi-t'un and Ta-shih-ch'iao was four days. In four days the history of the turning of the right flank was written, and Kourpatkin, who relinquished reluctantly his plans and appre-

## *Battle of Mukden*

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hensions on the east and awaited with intense anxiety the arrival of his First Siberian Corps at the railway settlement, was now preparing to break Nogi's advance by a concerted attack at the Hsin-min-t'un road. To co-operate in this, troops and artillery withdrawn from the apex of the line between the railway and the old embankment south of the Hun, poured up the railway. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Divisions came up abreast of the settlement, and parts of the Sixteenth Corps advanced to the vicinity of the Imperial Northern Tombs. Before I describe this scene, let us take a last look at the center and the east at the events which his military critics claim to have been the unworthy cause of Kouropatkin's great military error in moving the First Siberian Corps eastward.

All now realized that we would have but little time to observe the career of the east and center, for the retreat to the Hun was imminent, and the distance and the insistent, clamorous right flank seemed to relegate the fate of the east to the adjustment of another world.

The cloudy skies and raw wind had given place to sunshine and calm, and the snows had about disappeared from the sunny places—a Godsend to the unlucky soldier whose whole existence is chance. My last visit to the south line was swift, and I felt the strange attraction which our fortifications seemed to exert over the Russians, and especially, as the history of the battles shows, over General Kouropatkin. I felt loath to give up the great Sha-ho line which our side had won by sacrifice and created by the employment of its vast engineering organization. The Russians had hibernated so much that they had grown nearly superstitious of the efficacy of the earthworks in which we had so long burrowed. It was with a bound feeling, that, riding along, I realized that this false sense of security had taken hold of me as well, and I hurried away.

The constant battling had become so monotonous and common as to be nearly vulgar. The novelty of bursting shells was as commonplace as the clamor of a street piano, while the roar of the cannonading, now close, now distant, was forgotten in the contemplation of a cup of tea. The officers of the center were discussing the movements of the enemy opposite them. They believed from the evidence furnished by the capture of Japanese that only the division of the Imperial Guards formerly under Kuroki, and probably now detached to support Nodzu, together with some miscellaneous troops, made the attacks during February 28th, March 1st, and March 2d in the center, while the turning of their left in the mountains appeared to them to have been done by three Japanese divisions extending from Kao-t'ouling eastward.

The impression in the center was that the Japanese had shifted their troops westward, probably their main strength, though there was certainly no evidence of this. Not a night had now passed since the twenty-third of February that the Japanese had not attacked the entire Sha River line with monotonous trip-hammer cannon-fire, brain-racking infantry demonstrations and deadly assaults, while on Er-ta-kou, Novogorod and Pootiloff at unexpected moments fell eleven-inch shells, and along the position as far east as beyond Ma-chun-tan the Japanese had been unceasingly assaulting the Russian works. At Keng-ta-jen-shan, in the left center, shrapnel unexpectedly bursting over the headquarters of General Sassulitch and the Second Siberian Corps in the first Japanese attack created consternation and panic among the sutlers gathered in the headquarters' village, who instantly stampeded. At the position overlooking Pien-chia-p'u-tzu, where on two eminences were observatories for the artillery, the Japanese artillerists succeeded in killing a Russian colonel of artillery and another officer observer who

## *Battle of Mukden*

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from these points of observation were directing the fire of the Russian batteries.

At this point the Russian casualties were given as being three to four hundred. The Japanese offensive greatly surprised the Russians and rendered them doubtful of their convictions. As the battle increased on the right flank they believed that the Japanese line here was more and more attenuated and its operations subordinate to that main event. At the same time, notwithstanding the security of their fortified position, the Japanese frontal assaults were regarded as terrible, and the infantry generals wondered where all the Japanese troops came from. At Kao-t'ou-ling the Cossacks reported the Japanese using their dead for barricading and parapets. It was cold in the mountains and the dead were frozen in a night. Each morning, however, came the report that the Japanese were repulsed. In the center a large batch of prisoners was now reported taken, at Keng-ta-jen-shan the Japanese thrown back with difficulty, but finally with great loss. In Rennencamp's positions the two sides surged back and forth over several miles, cross-firing and enflading each other. News of this distant line was scanty, for all interest centered at Mukden, where the thunder was too loud for other events to be heard—it shut out all other thunder.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### SURRENDER OF THE REFUGE OF THE LAND FORCES— THE MANCHURIAN CAPITAL

THE battle was very hard now, as hard and wincing as the face of disaster itself, which had grown as close to the Russians as a Siamese twin. Officers and popes hesitated to speak of the future, and they had forgotten to mention victory. Not even "for the moment" was victory theirs, nor did they "for the moment," as had been their phrase in so many battles, entertain any convictions of success. Only the general staff ventured so far as to make use of the claim that the army was winning, and only the army contractor and merchant boasted any enthusiasm for the struggle which was not his to endure. Victory was a thing so precious and so august and unapproachable that those who by this time realized its blessedness were quite willing to die for it or to snuff themselves out as those votaries and slaves who sacrifice themselves to appease their god, though they may not approach him. Men who are merely earnest and honest will, in the end, die of the very monstrousness of vexation and chagrin at being undone. The imperial adventurers who instigated these crimes will not believe this. They will contend that the martyrs of Manchuria were possessed of a cause which it was quite worthy to die for, and that Russians who died there gloriously died for the cause of Russian power and glory.

The decisive struggle of all the eastern forces was on. This was the supreme struggle for which there had been a year of fencing and maneuvering on the part of both nations.

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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Port Arthur had been for months only a detached redoubt to divide the strength of the Japanese. Vladivostok and the home fleet were only a menace and not an active or present danger. The accounting with Japan was in the heart of Manchuria. It was here that the Czar and the Mikado were measuring swords and strong right arms. The supreme struggle, therefore, was here hot-foot and inexorable. It was here, and it was along the west—such a battle, already eight days in being, having more than any battle of any time, a surge and roll as of a great sea. There was yet no abatement, no arrest of cannonade, of infantry assault or of carnage. The mortality on the west and in the remote east was mounting to such a percentage as former armies had not endured for longer than a day or two days, or for a few hours. Human strength, therefore, was nearing its limit.

Knowing as much as a commander ever might know of his enemy's intentions and maneuvers, Kourapatkin, though according to expert critics having blundered in the use of the First Siberian Corps, yet declared himself satisfied when on the third this daring army reached his side and stood ready to sacrifice itself at his command, and did so. It was a profound moment. This glorious corps and its gallant commander, General Gerngrossz, had good reason to feel themselves abused, for they had been buffeted about behind the lines to no purpose for four days, careening, one might say, as an innocuous and truant lid might careen over the stormy deck of a vessel, to end at last in the machinery or go overboard into the sea. The spectacle, too, of Kourapatkin, the general of the whole army of the "Eastern Empire," who had never himself won any battle, welcoming this glorious, battered and exhausted miscellany as the last hope of his life, emitting an involuntary great sigh of relief, and hoping vainly that the lives of thousands and tens of thousands had thus been snatched from accident and saved to the services of

the state, and on the morning of the fifth reiterating to the Grand Army that he was satisfied with the course of the battle, is a study of which time may take especial note: it is a solemn paragraph for history. Immortality in the shape of misadventure is more amazing than mere greatness when it is thrust upon a man.

The First Siberian Corps was in sight of the western line when Kouropatkin gave out his personal assurances to the Grand Army on the third. And when he was able to strike with it on the fifth, he repeated his assurances of content with the progress of the battle, and sought to infuse some enthusiasm into the line which he so much needed for the main event of the war and of his life. His reasoning to the world was that the enemy had so far extended his line as to greatly weaken it, and had exhausted his strength and reached the limit of his dash. He therefore would proceed to break the enemy's line, which he held to be at the mercy of the Russian army. For this purpose he had selected for his attempt the Hsin-min-t'un road. But to believe that the army took hope from this possibility or presumption would be erroneous. The situation in the Russian army, as far as it was possible to discover by constant visitation of the lines, was tragic. The army was thoroughly a-wearied of good promise and was hoping for the end of the war.

On the fifth, Kouropatkin proposed, therefore, to break Nogi's advance and drive him back. Drive Nogi back! Yes, Kouropatkin had concentrated his reserve army on the Hsin-min-t'un road for that very purpose—it had no other *raison d'être*. I remember with what a strange sound this proposition struck the ear as it flew along the line, and what incredulity it raised, and satire, and sneers. There were no such military and bombastic proclamations as characterized the battle of the Sha-ho. Kouropatkin indulged in no vain and showy boasting; he was playing his last card.

The free use of the Hsin-min-t'un railway by themselves and the long employment of the Hsin-min-t'un road as a line of communication for officers, stores, ammunitions, telegrams, mails, messengers, etc., inspired the report within the Russian lines that Nogi was basing his army upon Hsin-min-t'un. He had seared and excoriated the entire Russian redoubt position exposed to him, hammering his opponents into their shallow defenses, into the very furrows of the ground which they occupied, with an expenditure of life, determination and persistence almost unknown, and had crushed and thundered on northward as though he might never stop. When it appeared that he had reached the limit of his stride, by a kind of tactical magic or legerdemain the Russians afterward asserted, he produced "another division" that struck consternation into the hearts of the defenders of the redoubts and the staff of the commander-in-chief.

In this situation Kouropatkin drew up in the Hsin-min-t'un road the noble First Siberian Corps, which had been so cruelly decimated at San-chia-p'u, but now revamped with a scratch miscellany under Gerngrossz. This was Kouropatkin's great move, his only initiative in the battle.

With much kissing of ikons and supplication before the throne of the god of battles and of chaos—for it was Sunday—the Russian army fell upon Nogi's center.

Battles had gotten to be so long in duration in Manchuria that though death were "vomited in great floods" we took our accustomed sleep when night came, except for our irregular duties. Now, however, the siege-guns on the west and the whole action was in such unusual places that it aroused the entire population of Mukden and its suburbs before dawn, to the last eventful days.

On March 4th the forces fighting Oku and Nogi in the battle of the Russian right flank were the Seventeenth Corps

and the Fifth Corps on the railway south of the Hun River; the Eighth Corps on the Hun and northward; the Tenth Corps opposite Mukden on the west, and the first Siberian Corps and part of the Sixteenth Corps in reserve northwest of Mukden.

On the early morning of the fifth—which was Sunday—while the battle on the Hsin-min-t'un road was being developed, I proceeded to the bank in the city and drew a sum of money which I thought likely to see me through the trouble which we were about to embrace. The manager of the bank told me that he had received orders to be ready at any moment to leave, and that he expected to go shortly to Harbin, though he would probably leave current accounts at Kung-chu-ling! Such a confession of distrust in the outcome of Kouropatkin's hopes and plans may pass into history without comment, as it needs no elucidation. Though the attempt to break Nogi's advance had only just been inaugurated, the bank had received orders, and the manager expected to retreat two hundred and eighty miles to the rear, though he might leave a portion of urgent bank transactions to be carried on one hundred and fifty miles in the rear! I then rode out to the south and circled around toward the railway. Outside the mud wall on the south were many more baggage trains than I had before seen moving around by the east wall and on northward. West of the Yu-lu, or so-called "Mandarin road," I passed four or five captured guns of a Japanese field battery under guard of a few soldiers. A sentry came out to arrest me, but I told him that I was of an officer's rank and went on. At the military road leading north from the bridges over the Hun nearest the railway, soldiers were drawing a siege-gun, the last of the big Russian guns from the Sha River. They had swung their rifles and haversacks and coat-rolls over the shaft, which was crowded full right up to the muzzle, and were themselves trudging

along with that indolent leisure which, when observed in the Orientals, we profess on all occasions to scorn. There were perhaps twenty-five of these men all tugging at ropes hitched to the gun-carriage, and proceeding like truant, reluctant schoolboys thinking of home.

That the siege-guns were being brought up from the center at the railway, where the Japanese had forced back the Russian line past Lin-shen-p'u, and occupied a large stretch of the former siege-gun position, was a portentous thing to contemplate—the army was strictly on the defensive and trying to save its siege-guns, nearly two hundred of which, each with a maximum range of ten versts—or about six miles—had been for weeks stationed in this zone, which the Japanese now partly occupied. A detachment from an engineer corps was hurriedly, with Chinese assistance, laying field railways and connecting up the bridge-head with the railway settlement. In the dunes closer to the railway was the immutable transport, stalled in the sand and snapping tugs and hamstrings. Refugees from Mo-chia-p'u crossed the railway embankment going east toward Mukden, while on the west side of the embankment re-enforcements of artillery and infantry moved south to the bank of the Hun, for Oku was wedging in at Mo-chia-p'u, and seemed bent on reaching the Hun railway bridge. Passing on to Yen-shi-t'un I found among the infantry supports there two officers of a company belonging to the Fourteenth Division of the Eighth Corps, who stated that they had been seven days in the battlefield without shelter, with irregular food, and sometimes none. They spoke hopelessly, and with their men lying on the ground plainly showed the strain of a terrible week. Shrapnel was breaking around them, and in a cave in the ground they had stored two unexploded shrapnel shells, which they invited me to examine. It was plainly visible that the fires of resistance and vigilance were burning out.

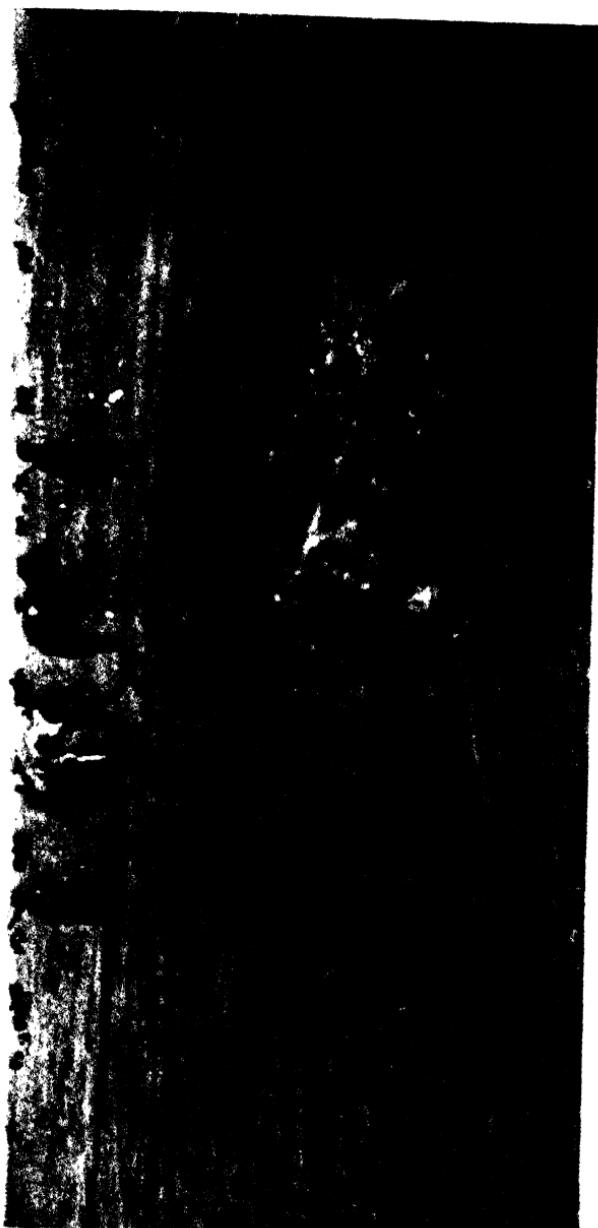
## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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"If they come," said one of the officers—meaning the Japanese—"we cannot oppose them. We have lain here on the bare, frozen ground now three days and nights, and we will be killed or pressed back."

Initiative was of course at an end. On their faces they showed the record of their own sufferings and were merely, as the Chinese say, "getting over the days." A little farther along were the dead bodies of mounted infantry horses lying where they had been killed in the infantry lines, and infantry were scattered in wide-open order for a thousand yards, lying or sitting on the ground where shrapnel was constantly breaking. The men when stricken were soon taken away. Coming up behind us I could see the orderlies dismount and walk for half a mile so as not to attract the enemy by their approach. The ground was still frozen, and at night, when there was biting frost, the soldiers were without camp-fires, for these would reveal their wretched refuge to the enemy. The battle-ground was without shelter and without any defenses except the hamlet walls, which were generally avoided because they attracted the artillery fire. It was a level, haze-fraught plain of bullets and shell, and hundreds of scattered thin lines of hunching, crawling men like reapers with strange iron and leaden sickles, or like the reaped sheaves where they fell over in limp dead bundles. We were so close to the thunder that we could see or know little of what was happening to others. We knew that the enemy was relentless, the tragedy relentless and monotonous.

Opposite the Hun River railway bridge a great Russian demonstration appeared to be in progress to assist the movement at the Hsin-min-t'un road. In reply Japanese shells fell throughout the afternoon at Ta-p'u, two versts west of the railway on the Hun. At four o'clock in the afternoon was carried out what appeared to be the principal cannonade in the northwest on the Hsin-min-t'un road. A bouquet of



The battlefield at Yu-hung-t'un, March 6th, when shrapnel was constantly falling here, killing men and animals



shells was bursting on the southwest, and a great explosion like an 11-inch shell or a powder magazine or fugase, in the direction of Su-chia-t'un. Eighty-nine cars of wounded passed northward over the railway, for five days close fighting had raged on the west. In returning to the settlement at evening a staff officer of the Second Army stopped to say that for February 28th, March 1st and 2d the number of wounded on the west was given as nine thousand!

Along the railway there was now a continuous military traffic between the Third Army, which was on the end below the Hun and Mukden, and the Eighth Corps and Tenth Corps of the Second Army and Mukden settlement, where Kaulbars had his headquarters; and up to and along the Hsin-min-t'un road. At the south edge of the settlement were congregated stragglers and malingeringers, and among the zemlyankas there, in every kind of vehicle, and on stretchers, were the wounded, while the dead were being laid out on the ground with no one to bury them.

The general staff was beginning to be desperate, for it had circulated reports of success on the south and east. The army newspaper, struck off daily in a covered railway-truck at the station, said on the fifth that until then, though the losses were considerable, the battle had been successfully waged. These false assurances, though they had no effect in arousing, may have had the effect of temporarily sustaining the army. There was an air of composure everywhere in this area, where anything was to be expected, though it is certain that the most intelligent and the ignorant alike were in the situation of a man who is afraid to look around for dread of what he may see.

At dawn of the sixth the guns on the west seemed even nearer, and wounded were being brought into the temple where I lived. The open ground outside the temple was a busy camp of transport and Red Cross contingents where

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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before was a cuckoo's solitude out of whose solemn quiet I had for days issued forth to the positions. Beyond this as I made my way to the Hsin-min-t'un road, where Kouropatkin's effort was likely to be that day decided, I met a string of refugees, empty-handed, slowly filing along. They were fresh from the battlefield, and among them was a young woman who came up to me and pointed to a shrapnel wound in her right breast. At her left she was suckling her babe. She had mistaken me for a Red Cross surgeon, and asked me for help. The native men and women with whom she was fleeing were hopeless and incredibly helpless, and as for myself, having no first-aid dressings, I was almost as helpless, and could only direct her to the English Mission, fully two miles away, where there was a large hospital for Chinese, already overrun with refugees.

It was the second day of the attempt to break Nogi's line. Where the road crossed the railway there were still other refugees. The battle of Kouropatkin's movement up the road was still some distance off, and I decided to go to the left flank of his attempt. I struck out in the direction of Yu-hung-t'un, made a deflection toward the line and entered the Village of Lin-kuan-t'un. All the hamlets and villages were completely deserted by Chinese, of whom not a soul was to be seen. I went into a broken court to conceal my mare in the shelter of an old house, and found it occupied by three Red Cross officers and sanitarians. They brought tea and questioned me about the battle, and among other things they asked whether America was not helping Japan; if Japan could get money for the war; what I thought of Russian soldiers; did not Americans sympathize with the Japanese; was not Russia dishonored by making peace now; had she not lost the honor of her arms if she stopped the war now?

In answer to all these questions, which were those of men

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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who, like all I had met on the field, were disheartened and spiritless as far as their attitude toward the war and toward victory at Mukden was concerned, I replied that America was not helping Japan; that Japan got money because she was successful; the Russian soldiers were not schooled and were mostly peasants, while the Japanese soldiers were not only highly intelligent, but were schooled and alert in mechanics, and therefore keen with arms. Americans, I said, knew perhaps more about Japan than about most other countries, while only the ill-fame of Russia had penetrated America. The Russian soldier, I continued, had honored himself and Russian arms in the defense of Port Arthur, whatever might be the criticisms of the conduct of Russian fighters elsewhere.

Present at this interesting interview was a young Russian correspondent in whose breast raged such a strife of conviction that he was much depressed. I believe he was a revolutionist. We went out of the compound together and turned into a road leading to the south. As we did so we met a squadron of cavalry coming in behind the hamlet. It was the immediate guard of General Prince Orbeliani, commander of the Daghestan Cossacks brigade, who had known every prominent war correspondent. Orbeliani stopped me in the road to tell me about General McClellan, and to give me the history of the American cavalry saddle which I rode. He spoke of Forbes and Macgahan, and then inquired about Francis D. Millet, the correspondent and painter, as though he expected him to be there, and as though his absence was incomprehensible. As Millet belonged to that charmed circle in which Forbes moves as an immortal I felt in this memory of the past as though I was in the presence of the dead, whose portraits and reminiscences I had seen in the *Century Magazine* many years before. He spoke of those who figured in my perception as demigods, as though

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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they were men. It was as though it were a mere idiosyncrasy of Millet that he had not come and was not there to meet him. At the close of the war I met Millet, whom I found a hale comrade, still enthusiastic about war, and I realized that in fact he might well have been with me.

General Prince Orbeliani was a remarkable character. He spoke English and had the reputation of speaking a score of other languages and dialects. He had known every distinguished foreigner who had visited Central Asia.

Southwest of Mukden settlement I turned to look at the re-enforcements making north when a general of Cossacks rode past alone. He was without even an orderly, was wildly riding, and looked anxiously away into the distance as though he did not see me. He made but a sorry figure, and my sympathy went out to him. He had entertained me at his bivouac on the lower Hun, where he had been a *bon camarade*, and since then I had not seen him. This had been in the winter, and the last thing I remembered about him was his excellent imitation of the antics of the monkey in illustration of the creatures, as he called them, that were the army's and Russia's antagonists. Since that time his proud regiments had been ignominiously driven out of their bivouac and sent flying fifteen miles to the rear! And here was he riding wildly alone, driven to ignominious apprehension and confusion by the men whom he had so ostentatiously professed to despise.

Continuing southwest I passed just behind the line of redoubts and stopped in a field back of Yen-shi-t'un, which seemed to be in the midst of the battle, for Nogi had begun a counter attack there and at Yu-hung-t'un to relieve the menace at Ta-shih-ch'iao. Here a general and staff officers came to survey the battlefield, and we stayed until the sun went down, in a cold wind, listening to the monotonous scour of shells and watching the Red Cross carts, which were to be



Part of the line at Yu-hung-t'un: these men said they had laid on the frozen  
ground at this point when they were without rails.



seen in all directions meandering through the roads of the flat plain. All the southwestern horizon was flooded with a milky smoke and haze from forage and buildings fired by the Russians in their retreat two and three days before, and from the cannon and fires started by exploding Russian shells.

The losses were at this time estimated at from twenty to thirty thousand, including two hundred and eighty-five officers, among whom was a general, and the Japanese were persisting in their counter-move at Yu-hung-t'un and Yen-shi-t'un, nine versts west of Mukden walls. Yu-hung-t'un was taken and retaken, and was now Russian, now Japanese. Now for the first time we learned what the great struggle with Nogi meant. The combatants there lay dead in each other's grasp, thick in streets, courts, and dwellings on the exposed side, their rifles and bayonets and sabers wrenched and twisted and sometimes disintegrated by great concussions and flying missiles. The garrison was at unexpected intervals subjected to frequent and awful shelling. The wretched village could not be surrendered, for the possession of it by the Japanese would enable them to shell the settlement with their field-guns. The First Siberian Regiment of the First Siberian Corps—called "The Empress' Own"—had lost more than a thousand men. General Kouropatkin reported also that of all the Urevsky Regiment—originally about twenty-four hundred—only six hundred and nineteen men and two officers survived at five o'clock. The tragedy of Tou-san-p'u in the battle of the Sha-ho was repeated here.

Toward night gloomy conjectures pervaded the line. Officers asked of each other: "Isn't Kouropatkin breaking the Japanese center? Does he not crush the insatiable and audacious Nogi?" As it was now evening I returned from the lines by way of the Hun River bridge and along the railway, where I found the usual malingeringers and traffic of battle, and when I reached the settlement a horseman

appeared from the direction of the commander-in-chief's train and said that General Kouropatkin had signed at five o'clock, an hour before, an ordinance for the surrender of the Sha River position and the retreat of the Grand Army to the Hun River position, along the line from Ying-p'an in the east to Fu-shun, Fu-ling and the Hun River bridge-head! By this the Grand Army fell back ten to twenty miles!

I paused for a moment to see if there might be a visible effect of this event; to myself realize its meaning. But the animated thousands around us were oblivious of this ordinance and were to remain ignorant of it for two days yet. Nogi is still flanking, thought I. Kouropatkin and Gern-grosz have failed at the Hsin-min-t'un road. Kouropatkin is involved in a race up the railway with Nogi and needs the ten miles of troops between the Sha River and the Hun River with which to overtake him. The determination of the flankers was telling.

This second day of Kouropatkin's attempt to break Nogi's advance had added nothing new to the history of the battle of the right flank, except that there was more and more prophecy of "that black and precipitous abyss whither all things are tending." The battle was ten days old, and no battle had lasted so long before. Captain William Judson, the American military agent, prophesied on the fifth that Kouropatkin had lost the battle and soon after he told the general staff that they had lost and informed them that he would remain at Mukden at the close of the battle. "I shall remain in Mukden for safety, for it will be a mere chance if the army escapes," said he. It was chance that so much of it escaped as did.

The cannonading continued undiminished from an hour before dawn till dark, and the losses of the fight had exceeded the losses in the battle of Liao-yang, and in magnitude the battle promised to equal that of the Sha River.

The Japanese losses were reckoned to be much greater than the Russian by the Russians themselves. The reports of success on the south and east had now been forgotten. The carefully circulated stories that Rennencamp had reached Liao-yang had had no power to arouse or encourage. At noon the advance of Japanese infantry provoked the Russian artillery to such fury that the shells fired many buildings and combustibles, the smoke of which joined the rising dust, and at evening the vast plain was enveloped in murky clouds, through which the battle could no longer be discerned, but out of which it roared until the sun sunk down into it and was lost.

Kouropatkin, having reassured his generals, took solely upon himself the responsibility for what he was about to do, and now signed in his car at Mukden the ordinance for withdrawing the south line to the prepared position on the Hun River, sealing forever the fate of the magnificent Sha-ho position, still creditably held!

The hues of night were alone adequate to my sensations as I crossed the settlement. The most independent observer cannot remain indifferent to the misfortunes of his strangest companions. Something of the gloom of nightfall took possession of me. Miles of lighted trains extended on the west and south of the settlement, and electric wires for light and telephones and telegraphs were strung riotously over roofs and poles and trucks. Mukden settlement was now like a confused hippodrome, struggling with the gloom, in which it looked ten times its real dimensions, and trying to bring light unto itself in its wilderness. If one could but look, thought I, as I made my way through the suburban hamlets to my temple, into the high places in St. Petersburg as the telegraph strikes off the inexorable truth, "Nogi is again flanking," striking it off with laconic, trip-hammer precision again and yet again, as inevitably day by day as

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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had been the setting of the sun, for six days, what gloom of depression and chilled hearts might he not witness there and in every place where the Grand Army of the Russias in its stronghold at Mukden, China's "Second Capital"—queen of all Manchuria—was breathlessly expected at last to crush an hitherto irrepressible enemy. At the same time, were one privileged to look into yet more exclusive precincts in Tokyo as the telegraph struck off the words, "The Russians are giving way," what calm and heartfelt gratitude to God in the style of Bushido, eloquent with the golden silence of Japan, might he not have witnessed in that communion of high patriots!

Before the ordinance to retire to the Hun was signed, General Kaulbars, commander of the Second Army, begged for another trial at crushing the Japanese on the west.

When the order reached the commander of the First Army and his generals there was consternation and chagrin. Under the belief that they were fighting an equal battle with the right flank they misunderstood the summons. General Rennen-camp telegraphed asking the commander-in-chief to permit him to hold his position where his Eastern Detachment had been attacked daily for eight days, but had taken three machine guns and was still holding fast. One of his infantry regiments, under General Eck, had lost sixty-five per cent. of its strength. General Eck said he could not understand where the Japanese got so many soldiers. Farther west, at Kao-t'ou-ling, the Cossacks reported that the mountain ridges grew perceptibly higher by the heaping up of dead bodies by the Japanese for barricades. The First Army, therefore, was still holding its position, its generals intent on Kourapatkin's beating Nogi. But Kourapatkin, knowing the army better than it knew itself, had no alternative. For if the line once gave way he knew there was nothing more to be done.



Russian soldiers bringing in Japanese wounded from the Hsin-min-t'un road, the field of



Oku's and Nogi's "iron brigades," as a Russian officer called them, threatened to crush the entire west. They had flanked it for six consecutive days and forced the Russian army, as they intended, out of its stronghold on the Sha-ho, and that army was now compelled to abandon a great zone hallowed by its blood and planted with its dead—a field where countless decorations representing the national sense of valor had been won. The region was one thick with fortifications, sanitary works, military roads, bridges, telegraphs, telephones, field and permanent railways, camps, hospitals, barracks of zemlyankas, and stores of fuel and forage, all of which must be surrendered. Upon nearly every roadway leading northward from the position could be found the field burying-ground begun in the previous September after the battle of Liao-yang; first with a little line of graves and ever uninterruptedly added to, the line daily stretching northward as though it would grow at last to its native heath as a vine that reaches out to the source of its life. These sacred places with their crosses painted green so as to appear less funereal than the white, sometimes devotedly cared for, these indigenous sanctuaries eloquent of Russian travail, were to be consigned to the neglect of strangers and enemies.

The controlling genius which withdrew the army from Hai-ch'eng, An-shan-chan, Ku-chia-tzü, and Liao-yang, to forestall worse disaster, was again taking time by the forelock, for if the Japanese had not soon broken the west, where they had prevailed from the first, they would have broken the center.

On the west it now resembled the siege positions. The plain opposite the settlement had been under fire for three days, shells breaking only a little beyond the railway station. The contest indeed, to judge from the battlefield, appeared to be decided. Graves were multiplying where there was opportunity to bury; dead animals everywhere disfigured the

positions, and dead men were now laid out in rows at the hospitals, uncovered, and guarded only against dogs. At that time it was calculated that by the ninth, one day after the arrival of the Grand Army at the Hun—which was fixed for the dawn of the eighth—the great contest at Mukden would be decided.

At two o'clock on the morning of the seventh the Japanese attacked the Hun position at Mo-chia-p'u, where they had arrived on the fourth, with great determination, and at dawn the cannonade shifted along toward the north over the eight-verst line, where not a day had passed without continuous bombardment, and extended to Ta-shih-ch'iao and far beyond.

At dawn as I went out of the door of my court at the temple I had to step over the shafts of a cart that had arrived in the night. Looking up I saw the dead bodies of two officers half reclining in the cart. The dust of the battlefield was frozen into their faces, and two horses were feeding among their legs on the straw they found there. In the same courtyard two Chinese carpenters were hewing out two wooden coffins for the bodies.

The group of temples had in the night been turned into a morgue to store for a time the bodies of officers brought from the field and to prepare for burial those who were dying in numbers in the hospitals near.

The first report along the lines was that the First Siberian Corps had failed. "Gerngrossz has failed, Kouropatkin has failed," they were saying, and, "Nogi is flanking." At the station reports that "Nogi has another *unknown* division" circulated like wildfire. Flanking and reflanking, Nogi each day by his legerdemain turned anew the amazed Russian right.

The department of censors belonging to the general staff was clearing out papers and packing up as I passed through

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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the settlement and on to the west and north of the station. After I turned into the Hsin-min-t'un road a heavy cannonade that began at 10:30 was carried on apparently in front of Pootiloff on the south. The battle on the Hsin-min-t'un road was now much nearer. Shells had already fallen in the grounds of the Imperial Northern Tombs. At the Hou-t'a (a pagoda) there was a group of press correspondents and military and civilian spectators as I passed, and a Russian correspondent who had overtaken me turned off and joined them. Keeping straight ahead I passed the first line of redoubts which started from the pagoda. Here there was an artillery park, and some infantry reserves sleeping and lounging in the sun on the escarpments back of the tree-branch entanglements, and awaiting their turn. Now and again a caisson sallied out hurriedly to a battery a little way ahead and returned. Farther on were infantry resting behind a hamlet and in the buildings of the hamlet, and in others still farther on were Red Cross field-stations into which wounded from the west were being carried. As I arrived several wounded young Japanese of Nogi's army were carried in. One, shot through the head, looked to be a boy of seventeen. We crowded together in the little compound to see them, and the Russian soldiers gathered around and silently gazed at these strange little soldier-dwarfs who were such bitter antagonists, sometimes gently smoothing their rough coverlets. A sanitaire came and poured brandy in the mouth of the one shot through the head.

At the edge of the hamlet of Hsiao-fan-shi-t'un were two machine-guns smeared with clay, one set in the stubble, and the other under cover of a broken mud wall. Leaving my mare in the shelter of the hamlet I walked beyond the line of bursting shrapnel and brisants and took a position among the mounds of a native graveyard beside the road from where the surrounding battlefield could be surveyed. On the right

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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a line of Japanese shells extended toward Pa-chia-tzü and out of sight. On the left was one of our batteries receiving a terrific shelling. The ammunition wagons that were serving it got in and out with great excitement and difficulty. Across the front, under fire, came a squadron of cavalry in open order retiring to low ground, from where now out of view they filed in behind the walls of a hamlet and stopped. Past me in the road trailed slowly and heavily one after another the litters of wounded, borne by soldiers glad to get away from the firing line upon any pretext. These files were disturbed by the shells that fell around them, but the men occasionally let their burdens down to rest, easing them clumsily in their sad couches. One of the touching spectacles of the battlefield is the awkward kindness with which soldiers minister to each other. In four successive litters were Japanese carried along under the shells from their own artillery, and, such are the incongruities of the battlefield, I saw the big Russian soldiers let them tenderly down in this rain of fire, while they respread their coats over them! Back of us and to the right and left I could see here and there homeless dogs slinking away from where the shrapnel bullets and brisants beat upon the dry fields, sending up little clouds of dust which gave the fields the appearance and feeling of being the playground of unseen spirits, as the Chinese believe is the case where the whirlwinds of autumn and winter gambol.

I passed back and around this lonely and grawsome field, which was that of the main force attacking Nogi's center. There were deserted provision depots and abandoned ice stores left open to the sun and wind. Enterprises, or the wrecks of enterprises like these, when abandoned for battle seem animate from their late human associations.

The center of the battle with Nogi was now shifted far to the right, where Kouropatkin, on account of the counter-



Saving the siege guns of the Sha-ho position



attack of the Japanese at Yu-hung-t'un, was falling back to his line of redoubts. The Japanese reached Pa-chia-tzü and were ready by evening to break the railway in our rear. Batteries and men of the south line were racing north, but to no purpose. It was with great difficulty that Kouropatkin could hold Yu-hung-t'un, where perhaps the most awful deeds of the battle occurred. Night closed on complete defeat on the Hsin-min-t'un road, with the railway exposed and General Burger, of the Sixteenth Corps, guarding the railway, unable to protect it.

The positions on the south remained throughout the day unchanged; the attacks of the Japanese during the night of the sixth, having been repulsed at Pootiloff, Keng-ta-jen-shan and Kao-t'ou-ling. At the same time the Japanese had advanced in their enveloping movement eight miles on the Russian right flank. The great gun demonstration continued by the Russians along the south from 10:30 in the morning, had now raged two days, or since Kouropatkin encountered the difficulties of his attempt to best Nogi at his own game. At Su-chia-t'un, which was now the great hinge of the Russian line, there was an almost continuous explosion of shells during the sixth and seventh. At 10 P.M. the Russian batteries along the south bombarded the Japanese positions for two hours, and at midnight the army quietly retired from Pootiloff, Novgorod, Er-ta-kou, and all the great works celebrated for so long as the Sha-ho position.

The two dead captains were still at my door when I entered at night, and on the morning of the eighth I saw that they were no longer alone, for several dead had arrived to keep them company.

The road outside was bustling with transport trains, which seemed interminable, and it was difficult to get through them. It did not seem possible that any army could have such miles upon miles of transport. The questions which the sight of it

inspired were: Whence come? Whither going? Where are their keepers? It was as though the baggage of all the living and dead that ever fought in Manchuria was haunting that spot.

To the left of the Hsin-min-t'un road there was a settlement cemetery surrounded by an open brick wall. The priests of the Orthodox State Church could all day be heard droning their spiritual *te deum* as they laid out numbers of high officers in shrouds to be interred in this choice place. Opposite this cemetery and beside the Hsin-min-t'un road, was the Kuei-kung—or mortuary—of the Chinese, where two or three soldiers who had turned it into a bivouac, as their own priests moaned out their requiems a few hundred yards away, continued to break up the coffins of the Chinese dead for firewood, as they had been doing throughout five months—the worm ever living upon the mold. Tocsin and dirge and the clatter of vandalism were intermingled.

The sutler element were never quite so angry as on this day. In their settlement, whose bounds had been laid out by the *gendarmes* on the west side of the Mukden dagoba, those who had been caught again here were like hornets whose nest has been disturbed. Their hardihood was generally admirable. Some of them had acted on their own wise counsel and moved out at the beginning of the battle, but the larger number had risked another Russian battle, and were paying the penalty for their credulity. In utter desperation they hung on—with curses on Russian luck—to their drink and preserve-shops and high prices. The native thieves against whom the *gendarmes* had taken measures at one time and another all winter, were waiting around the corner like vultures to swoop down upon them. The *gendarmes* were no better. At one small shop I found my Greek of the An-p'ing road, whom I had not seen since the beginning of the battle of Liao-yang. He had not

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

---

been on the battlefield outside the settlement, and here in the settlement, at least, he had no "fear speak Anglis."

"How are you?" said he gladly, and shook hands.

"You see me here; we both come all way from Liang-chi-shan. Me have nice business here—no good, Russian all time go back. You think we go back? You think Japanese come here?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Then me lose everything. Me no Chinaman go Tieh-ling."

His experience here was the last straw. He never afterward appeared within the Russian lines, and his lasting curse rests upon Russia.

Passing out on the north side of the settlement and following along the railway was a curious train of improvised ammunition carts hauling loaded mortar shells, and en route to the Imperial Northern Tombs. Many kinds of vehicles were represented in this train, from go-carts to Japanese transports, carriages and Peking carts. They were preceded by a squadron of Cossacks with whom was Taburno, a Russian correspondent.

Opposite the railway station on the west, just without the switches, were innumerable troops. The division numbers on their shoulder-straps showed that immediately facing the settlement, within a half mile, more than four army corps were represented. Divisions Fourteen, Fifteen, Thirty-five, Fifty-five and Sixty-one, as well as two division numbers—Thirty-four and Sixteen—that I knew nothing of, covered the ground and made it black with men. They would see that the railway settlement was not endangered. Telephone wires radiated from General Kaulbars' house in the settlement and were trailed about in the furrows leading west over the plain to the position where, as had been the case for three days, the shells were continually bursting. The relics and parts

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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of four corps that were defending the west were supported by at least the relics of a part of three corps. The Seventeenth European, Fifth Siberian, Eighth Siberian and Tenth Siberian entire, were supported by the First Siberian, the Sixteenth Corps, which was still arriving from Russia during the progress of the battle, and parts of the Sixth Siberian Corps, while the Western Detachment guarded the north. Fully eighty thousand men were opposing Nogi and Oku along the west. Throughout the morning the Eighth and the Seventeenth corps held the old railway embankment from Su-chia-t'un to the Hun.

Losses that were on the seventh estimated at thirty-five thousand now jumped to fifty thousand, and promised to reach sixty to seventy thousand within another twenty-four hours—men feared to reckon the consequences of the continuation of the battle. The dead and wounded were hourly falling into the enemy's lines, and it became generally known that considerable bodies of troops were from time to time disappearing. During the day I learned that telegrams were constantly reaching the commander-in-chief stating this fact. The feelings of the officers when confronted with the reports that the men were at intervals passing into the enemy's lines without military reason may be imagined, but may be better understood in the light of the subsequent flight from Mukden.

The Japanese now broke the railway line and the telegraph near Hu-shi-t'ai, and all messages were refused by the telegraph department. Japanese scouts were discovered at dawn in the groves of the Imperial Northern Tombs, two miles from Mukden, and were driven out by rifle fire, but their artillery had now advanced east of Pa-chia-tzü, and was throwing shells into the groves, which are the sacred precincts of the relics of the first Manchu Emperor of China!

In passing through the settlement again I had a glimpse of the Empress's hospital, and saw that the floors as well

as the cots were crowded with wounded. The chief surgeon said he had there three hundred wounded officers, and that the whole number of wounded could not be less than forty thousand. He would remain, he said, with the wounded officers whatever happened, as they could not be moved. What he meant, though I did not know it until afterward, was that he had refused to consent to the wounded being removed. When ordered to evacuate the hospital he had replied that it was his business to save, not to waste or destroy life. He then received permission from the commander-in-chief to remain when the army retired. This he did, together with a number of faithful nurses and sanitaires, fighting the flames that attacked the buildings and rescuing the wounded from them, and seeing them carefully received by the Japanese Red Cross.

In the east the line had reached Shi-hu-ch'ang, and the bridge-head south of Mukden was occupied and the army passing through it to the defenses in the sand dunes on the north bank of the Hun, where strong redoubts with tree-branch obstructions wired together awaited them. General Linievitch moved his headquarters north of the Hun, and was lost to the subsequent fortunes of the battle, for communications with him were impracticable from the moment the Hun River was abandoned on the following evening, and the Japanese severed his line.

At the Hun River railway bridge the last refugees were coming in from Mo-chia-p'u. From the high abutment on the north bank, which commanded a view of the outspreading plain, a wonderful sight was spread. As far as the glasses reached was one vast conflagration which, by this time, from the great clouds of smoke rolling over it, gave the plain the appearance of smoldering in its own destruction. Over Mo-chia-p'u in the southwest a great white smoke column ascended, and without interval thence eastward continued

a dull low-hanging veil of smoke, dust and haze, high above which could be identified the smoke columns of more than a score of villages. At Chang-shang-mu-t'un in the east, late the commander-in-chief's headquarters, the conflagration of semi-Russian houses, and the fuel stores at Ku-chia-tzü near by, produced such dense and formidable clouds that in the rising wind they reached almost to Mukden. In this zone, fired at dawn and slowly desolated, a few infirm and impoverished Chinese farmers tottered about trying to save their houses if possible, or whatever they might. They had endured the usurping army which had permitted them to remain to see their agricultural substance confiscated without pay; their implements consumed in the oven furnaces, and had then subsisted on table crumbs that were better than anything they had even known. And at last it was their fate to see their roof-trees fired over their heads in spite of all supplication and kow-tow, and to potter about around the flames while the Japanese, carefully testing the ground, slowly advanced through the midday gloom.

North from Mo-chia-p'u the line of redoubts could be traced by the bursting shells, until sight and sound of the same was lost in the distant north, where the little white puffs of shrapnel shells were the last evidences of battle revealed in the binocle. Only a little beyond this point the Japanese had reached the railway, which was now broken in two places, both within twenty miles of Mukden. While standing on the embankment, Japanese brisants shot at extreme range struck only a verst to the west of the railway where there was a great camp. A long line of artillery from inside the old railway embankment south of the Hun entered the line of the bridge-head and was moving up toward us. Hurrying across the Hun I learned that the bridge-head here was just being occupied. When asked if they had had an unlucky battle, the artillerymen hurrying with their batteries along the

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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dusty road, said no, they had only received orders to report at once on the extreme right. Verily, Nogi was still flanking. I was with a British military agent—Captain Ayres—and we were arrested by pickets outside the bridge-head, and it was half an hour before we were released through the intervention of a passing officer. In turn we followed the columns of artillery northward. There was a brigade of them. At my side rode a Russian who commented on the infantry stragglers and malingeringers in the road with us:

“They will not stay in the ranks. Some are unfit to be soldiers, and all of them are tired out with the war.”

Some were in fact wounded. Others were front-scared, bullet-scared, shrapnel-tired, worn out from too much being expected of them. Some of them looked like domestics, and all were mere peasants.

“They go over to the enemy if they have a good chance,” said he, “many of them.” “If their officers disappear, are wounded or killed, they remain under shelter until the Japanese lines move past them, when they surrender.”

The settlement more than at any time was now articulate with war. The zemlyanka settlement just south of the sidings, set apart for the headquarters' trains, was an extensive hospital which somewhat resembled a slaughter yard. A wide space on one side was set apart for the dead, of which there were several hundred. The road through the place was chock-a-block with four-wheeled baggage wagons and Chinese carts loaded with wounded, and regular field ambulances of several different patterns—all full of wounded Russian and Japanese soldiers, whom it was impossible for the sanitaires to attend. Passing soldiers stopped to look at them. They had waited, many of them, for hours, even days, for assistance which might never come. In their tumbrils drawn up in the gutters and between the zemlyankas these feverish men were some of them sleeping,

some eating, and some were dying. But all of them I noticed possessed that automatic quiet and uncomplaining spirit, becoming men who go to war, for such have nothing to ask for, nothing to expect but the worst—all else being mere gratuity. The display of wounded was greater than I had ever seen and was such as to make one question his own right to leave the place without some effort in their behalf. The Red Cross, as is inevitable in war, was inadequate. All was inadequate, one could not help standing aghast at that all-powerful fact. Not only human implements and human strength were inadequate, but human wisdom, human inspiration and human control. We were breaking from our moorings and drifting with time.

On the west this had been perhaps the hardest day since the beginning, for the Japanese appeared even more determined and more persisting at all points of a line fifteen miles in length to break the whole west and reach the railway. The armies of the south were moving north by all roads, and had begun to realize that the battle of Mukden had already surpassed in magnitude the battle of the Sha-ho, and would probably exceed in magnitude any other battle of the war. At sundown as I entered the settlement again, the Japanese, raising a field-gun to the angle of extreme range, burst two or three shrapnel high up, a verst west of Mukden station, evidently as a salute. Near the frame building that had been Admiral Alexeieff's headquarters and private house, was a Japanese officer prisoner. He was wounded, his arm was in a sling, and was being taken in the direction of the headquarters' train. Both Japanese officers and men were to be met with all about the settlement, especially the wounded, who were cared for in the same manner as the Russian wounded.

The road from the Hun through the settlement was clanking at dusk with the interminable artillery, hurrying to

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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the north. And in the side streets were caught the trams of army paraphernalia, which, with the ambulances, make all battles look alike, for they appear principally to consist of the wounded and the baggage.

With the coming darkness the battle seemed to close, and it was the thirteenth day. In the night the Japanese continued their attacks and rushed a village on the right, where they secured and held several isolated houses with machine-guns. The ninth, which was to be our last day at Mukden, dawned with the right hinging at a spot on the north bank of the Hun inside Mo-chia-p'u, which the Japanese had taken. Cognac at dark had fallen from four roubles, fifty kopeks, to two fifty, and the desperation of the army was reflected in the sutlers. It was the fourteenth day of battle that was to be the unlucky day, for upon the fourteenth a dust-storm such as is common to all north China and Mongolia obliterated the landscape and buried the armies in clouds of profound gloom. It was as though nature in very abhorrence of the spectacle was drawing a veil over this unexampled great sorrow. Among the Chinese it was an omen, some signal event in their history having coincided with just such a storm. And to the army itself it was hardly less than an omen, for the sense of an attending great Jehovah had gotten into them through their adversities. Physical exhaustion had awakened their temperamental and spiritual vision. At dawn the dust was blinding, and toward noon it was impossible to distinguish any part of the battle line. The shells seemed to go wandering about in the upper air looking for some place to break. The possibility of terrible and grawsome encounters where none would be able to see, and the apprehension of the strategical advantage the enemy might gain by the gloom, were themes which displaced those conjectures with which the army had been for a fortnight harassed.

The storm seemed to accelerate the movement of the

armies that were pouring up the right flank. General Linievitch was reported fully retired with the First Army to the north bank of the Hun, and was himself some place east of Fu-ling. General Bilderling was established in a village at the southwest corner of Mukden walls, while General Kaulbars was still at the settlement directing the defense of the right, for that was all that it was possible to attempt. In order to steady the army when the Japanese came in contact with the line again at the Hun, the commander-in-chief maintained his headquarters at the settlement in his train, but even then it appeared that this was a mere demonstration, like the detention of the bank, which had been simultaneously ordered and was intended especially to impress the Chinese. The device was of small avail. In the settlement the bottom went out of all prices, while roubles went out of the market—they, too, had fallen with the fall of cognac and champagne. The native bankers knew that the Russian Bank was still in town, but they sent the rouble to its lowest level. The native merchants buried their roubles in the floors of their shops and went to printing Japanese flags! In a couple of hours after the commencement of the storm they were prepared to resume business with Asahi beer, Kobe matches, Japanese cottons, stationery, canned milk, etc., under the administration of Oyama. The interpreters of Russian in the shops forgot the speech which had been golden, and brushed up a few Japanese phrases that had been handed down from 1896. Those Chinese army interpreters who, by blackmail and other dark crimes, had enriched themselves, armed with Russian sword and pistol and provided with horses, prepared to ride away.

On the morning of the ninth I made sure that my horses and my cart were in readiness, and left my servants to guard them while I took my faithful Australian mare and made a final tour of our now famous western line.

It was still repeated from mouth to mouth that Kourapatkin had declared himself satisfied with the situation, but I am obliged to confess in mentioning this that I did not know whether this repetition was in irony and derision, or in wonder and speculation. Though Kourapatkin had failed on the northwest he had held the Japanese at his inner line of defense along the high ground back of the Imperial Northern Tombs and recovered and repaired the railway and telegraph to the north. These facts, together with his statement of continued confidence, served to hold the army steady.

About one o'clock the wind and dust subsided, and the sun shone out lazy and warm.

The dead on the west had not been buried for four days. There was blood everywhere behind the main positions at the redoubts; blood of slaughtered beef, flesh of animals killed by projectiles, and dead men's faces! Here, where "by the hundred and the thousand men's lives are cropt," were thousands of infantry supports sleeping among dead draught and riding animals, and the débris of slaughtered cattle and sheep, and bursting shrapnel. Farther south along the line were more supports, hugging the firm earth of which they seemed a part; it would not be long until some of them were of it. A hundred feet from the track six horses had been killed by a brisant. A brisant routed a wagon-train with which I was moving, and the soldiers by the roadside, taking no notice of the brisant, only quarreled about the horse feed. Four Russian soldiers carried on their shoulders a wounded Japanese; at a battery momentarily quiet the gunners sat in the mouth of their blindage (bomb-proof) ready to pounce out and meet the enemy's fire. At the little hamlet opposite Mo-chia-p'u the gun-horses stood half asleep behind the mud walls of the houses, while the mortars an hundred and fifty yards in front were worked furiously. The road lead-

ing up the Hun was plowed into dust by the caissons feeding these mortars, which were throwing shot into Mo-chia-p'u. Along the road leading up the railway where so many had passed before them, marched as best they could half a dozen wounded Japanese prisoners. They were very tired, but they were the center of an amazing spectacle, for they were leading a mile's length of Russian cannon in rapid retreat to the distant north.

The troops poured north. It could not be disguised that the bandy-legged conquerors were hustling the Russian armies. Six Japanese prisoners stopped by the wayside to rest, and the clumsy Russian soldiers who, as McCullagh says, look like great outdoor animals, helped to get the cloth of their trousers free from the clotted blood of their wounds—and tenderly drew it back over the wounds again.

A more unhappy army certainly never fought a battle or tried to do the will of a sovereign. They were downcast, beaten, these veterans of so many hard-fought battles—all of which had ended in defeat. Their faces were flaccid, sleepless, they were tired, and they seemed to divine that this was the beginning of their last retreat.

In making their way along, the Russian and Japanese soldiers could not speak to each other, but went with a dumb communion, finding under the deep dark shadow of a wild-looking busby, or beneath the little shadow of a service-cap, as the case might be, eyes kindlier than they had imagined before they met.

From the railway bridge twenty-five burning villages could be counted around the horizon between Mo-chia-p'u and Chang-shang-mu-t'un. Soon after this the wind rose and the weather thickened. The Japanese had by this time crowded up through the smoke and desolation of the southern plain to the bridge-head itself. They were but four and one-half versts from the embankment where we stood, and at

three o'clock in the afternoon a part of the Russian rear-guard occupied the redoubt at the bridge abutment, from where the officers searched the hazy, dusty plain beyond the river for the enemy. Their troops maneuvered the guns there, bringing up ammunition from the rear, and the commander ordered me to retire out of fire, for we were then within rifle range of the enemy.

To fifty miles of summer haze on the west and south add the smoke of a thousand square miles of burning fuel and forage stores, and villages; add the smoke of battle, the gloom of a great Mongolian or Manchurian dust-storm, and it will be readily understood that in all these terrors, separate conflagration from explosions or newly fired camps were no longer distinguishable. The storm increased in intensity filling men with awesome wonder, for indeed the elements seemed to have brought to the scene all that could have been lacking of the sable hues of war. So great was the gloom and sound—it was like moonlight—that the battle seemed to stop, and nothing was heard but the wind. "The Japanese," said an officer, "are taking advantage of the obscurity of the storm to shift their guns."

The native city toward the close of day was hushed. Shops were closed, and the people who were aghast at the artillery, which at intervals could now be heard in all directions, had for the most part deserted the streets.

In its new position the Russian army held its own for several hours. It was not a brilliant record. Kouropatkin, with all the troops which for thirty hours he had been marching up the railway, was unable to drive Nogi farther back from the railway in the region of Hu-shi-t'ai; while Linievitch, in supreme command of the magnificent hill fortifications on the north bank of the Hun, was not able for an hour to hold his line. About four o'clock, when the whole vast battlefield was enveloped in darkness almost equal to

## *The Tragedy of Russia*

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that of night, the Japanese crossed the Hun opposite Chiuchan, and the Russian line parted and fell away.

We did not know this. Only the commander-in-chief knew it, and about sundown ordered the army to retreat. Before sundown the storm lifted long enough to enable the artilleryists to renew the firing and the infantry scouts to try and discover what had taken place during the gloom. As it did so the roar of artillery could be heard in all directions. The impressions made at the time when we heard from the direct north and the northeast these cannon sounds, added to the now stale and monotonous cannonading on the west and south, were in the nature of revelations well-nigh impossible to believe.

At the station just after dark there was still a great commotion from the army of the south falling back, converting the settlement into a roaring metropolis. The settlement buildings were singularly quiet. Intermingled with the long lines of lighted trains extending in all directions, were tired animals, tired soldiers, tired vehicles, tired prisoners, and some nondescript Chinese. Everywhere were improvised camps, railways, telegraphs, and telephones, where three days before were fallow fields.

The first thing learned was that Kouropatkin's train had hurriedly gone north at nightfall. As it proceeded up the railway with smothered lights it passed at two places in sight of the Japanese pickets, and spectators standing on the dark platforms looking through the beveled glass doors of the vestibules could see, when the guns flashed, the red muzzles of the Mikado's cannon.

The entire city, the Hun position, hospitals filled with wounded, everything at that hour that was incapable of carrying itself, was slated for abandonment, and the fight given up. General Zarubaieff was already selected to form a rear-guard, though he was cut off on the east. His son

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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unwittingly had ridden across the rear of the Japanese column that had broken the line at Chiu-chan, and had been fired on by the Japanese, whom he took for his own soldiers, and having passed into his own line again with dispatches, was decorated for the exploit. All knowledge of the real situation was carried away in the commander-in-chief's train. Only orders for immediate retreat were known. Dreading the effect upon the army of a knowledge of its plight, and in danger of being cut off, the headquarters fled. Mukden was sealed with secrecy except for the scurry and flight which nothing could conceal.

In the railway restaurant two topics were discussed over the still smoking samovar: the flight of the commander-in-chief with the headquarters staff, and the losses of the battle. The wounded were given at fifty thousand then—though this was known to be too small—and the dead and lost at twenty thousand more. Men jumped at these figures, which a careful calculation would have increased.

The censore was dismantled, and the officers there were eating a hurried meal off a goods-book. These officers doled out the wretched information that the telegraph had been closed and decamped; that the censore was moving north and that messages must be sent to Tieh-ling for transmission by telegraph. This information was quite unnecessary, considering that the mere looks of these men and the appearance of their surroundings fairly shouted out the facts. The chief officer did not make any attempt to explain the situation—he did not even explain that retreat was ordered, and that it was time to go. It was the reign of bedlam—every man for himself, and the hindmost to go to the devil if he could escape the Japanese, which he could not, for the Japanese would have the hindmost in spite of the devil, as they had always had.

On my way to the Yellow Temple I stopped to inform

a Russian friend, correspondent Borodovkin, of what I had seen and heard. He was incredulous.

"Yes," said I, "cognac can now be had at the settlement for the carrying it away. The censors are bickering for a railway truck to get them to Tieh-ling. Kouropatkin is now already close to Tieh-ling, and we have nothing to do but to follow after them all."

I got out into the night again and made my way home. The camps about the Temple were quiet, for they had not received the order of retreat, and the Japanese were forging their way far north of us into Linievitch's line. As I passed in through the courtyard door, my two captains were fitted into their narrow berths of wood, a little cramped, but ready for the journey! I told my servants to sleep in the cart with my goods, which were partly loaded, so that the goods would not be commandeered or stolen in the night, and going in I ate the supper which my cook had prepared, and sat down to write my last telegrams on the battle that had just closed.

At three o'clock in the morning of the tenth, while I was still writing, a messenger came from Borodovkin to say that he would leave for Tieh-ling at dawn. The settlement at midnight was deserted and the buildings strewn and littered with papers, while lamps had been left burning to deceive the enemy's spies and balloon scouts, and give them the impression that the settlement was still occupied. All night there was a spirited contest at the railway station for transportation by train to the north, for the denizens of the settlement were learning of the flight of the army. Men and women hurried away as best they could just as soon as they discovered the true situation, which slowly and in spite of the secrecy was percolating the scattered foreign homes of Mukden and its environs.

It is fitting to let the veil of night close the scene of con-

## *Surrender of the Manchurian Capital*

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flict on the battle-ground around Mukden, for all the armies were now in retreat. "Men's nerves were worn out, men's hearts were desperate," and the Grand Army of Russia, beaten as it never had been beaten, sought its escape.







